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WAGING A MINDLESS WAR

TOM, Dick and Harriet read with pride how many aircraft they have made, how many English men and women have been killed, how much butter they have not eaten, how many hours they have worked. They do not grudge the effort, for nothing less would have sufficed to prevent themselves and Europe being conquered by Nazi Germany. Because English men and women have done so much and borne so much, because of their example and their encouragement through the B.B.C. in 1940 and 1941, the common people of Europe refused to accept Nazi overlordship and were ready to regard us as liberators when we returned to the Continent in 1944. But what is being done with the victory that is being achieved? Merely to defeat the Germans creates a chaos and a vacuum. Hitler had a plan—diabolical if you will—but a plan for Europe. We have destroyed it. Against Germany we are using every weapon except political warfare. Hence the perplexity of Allied Generals, who find themselves in a position of great military superiority, and who are surprised by the high morale and tough fighting qualities of new, almost untrained German recruits. They fight because they have no alternative. We have offered them nothing but unconditional surrender, and they believe, just as we believed when we were prepared to fight to the death in 1940, that the alternative is national and personal destruction. Goebbels has told them so, and Goebbels has our own propaganda to support him. To rule out political warfare, which means, in effect, to rule out policy and, indeed, to wage a mindless war, is the surest way to prolong the fighting, to lose thousands of Allied soldiers unnecessarily and to create in Europe a desert which the energies of the next generation must be largely devoted to rebuilding.

What of the countries we are liberating? In Italy, devastated by our arms, our political intervention is paralysing the country's efforts, however faint, at reconstruction which, to be effective, must be on Socialist lines. In Belgium and Greece "liberation" is an even worse misnomer. No one has ever thought the Pierlot Government more than a stop gap; it is headed by a group of men who were representative of Big Business in Belgium and who have never shared in the bitter experience of Occupation. It has little popular support; it relies on British bayonets, which have helped to scotch a threatened general strike and have policed the Parliament while a series of repressive measures have been passed which take Belgium more than half-way towards Fascism. The military argument that our lines of communication have to be secured serves as a plausible excuse; but a moment's reflection will show that a Government which roused and energised the people by its popularity and by its unqualified anti-Fascism would serve our purpose better. It is noticeable that in Belgium, as in Greece, the Right has discovered a dastardly Communist plot to overthrow the regime.

The interference of Allied officials and soldiers with the natural social evolution of "liberated" countries is now quite open and undisguised. The Pierlot Government is our puppet; the Italian Government is ham-strung; and the Papandreou Government, which was supposed to be a genuine compromise, is subject to continuous pressure from Whitehall and Cairo. The result is to create an impression that the British are determined, even at the expense of chaos and misery, to maintain, wherever they can, the social order which was willing to collaborate with the Nazis as an alternative less disagreeable than the cession of power to popular forces. The result of such interference will be to produce, from Antwerp to Athens, an aversion from the Allies only less great than that formerly felt towards the German occupiers.

We all know that the Allies do not in the long run intend to occupy and dominate Europe. While this phase of bullying and intrigue can do great harm and produce great misery, it is certain to mean a violent reaction after we leave. Such a policy may come naturally to the soldiers and officials who run the war. They have always preferred it to be mindless, since they are dimly aware that if objects were stated they would prove Socialistic. Their attitude we understand, but Labour leaders, nominally Socialists, are members of the Churchill Government. Labour and Trade Union conferences are shortly to meet. Is it too much to hope that the progressive forces in England can even at this late hour impart some social purpose and far-sighted policy into the British war effort, which is as immense on the material side as it is, on the mental side, vacuous, sterile and dangerous?

A Stormy Passage Home

In Rome this week an internal Cabinet crisis has been transformed into a clash between the Italian and British Governments. Signor Bonomi has been officially informed that Count Sforza, whom he was about to appoint as Foreign Secretary, would not be acceptable to Downing Street. This veto on the appointment of a popular and respected elder statesman is a sharp reminder to the Italians that they have not yet "worked their passage home" or fully recovered their status as a sovereign people. What the Count, a man with an honourable Liberal record, had done to incur this veto, is not disclosed. Was it his public rebuff to Prince Umberto, when that royal caretaker said in an interview that the question of the monarchy would be settled not, as the Government intended, by a Constituent Assembly, but as the royalist minority proposes, by a public plebiscite? With the Carabinieri in charge, the latter method might yield the result desired by Mr. Churchill and Umberto. The consequence of this public humiliation, will be to lower the prestige of any Cabinet under M. Bonomi or any premier of the Left—if, indeed, it can be formed at all. This may, indeed, have been the result at which the Foreign Office aimed. By comparison with this aspect of the crisis, the internal troubles which led Signor Bonomi to resign are of secondary importance. He was weary of the dissensions between the two groups of his Ministers, Socialists and Communists against Catholics and Liberals. His resignation reflects, in part, Italian disunity and, in part, Allied interference. Regretably, British action about Sforza was taken without the consent of the Russians, Americans or French.

Greek Equilibrium

The problems facing M. Papandreou are still unresolved. No government can maintain itself in Greece without the co-operation of the E.A.M.; and similarly E.A.M. cannot afford to ignore a government which has some Greek support in Athens, and which, above all, is backed by the British. Since the whole economic and political structure of the country collapsed with the expulsion of the Nazis, the population can only subsist with Allied help—a fact which gives considerable power to their nominees. No doubt M. Papandreou and the Right hoped to play on this, especially as it can be argued that the work of the Resistance should now be at an end. E.A.M., which is a political as well as a military force, agreed to dissolve its partisan units if a Regular Army was established which would be free from political influence. The Right, however, being unable to use the troops under the command of Colonel Zervas which were to be disbanded with the E.A.M. formations, hurriedly brought into Greece the Mountain Brigade and the Sacred Battalion, both of which were hand-picked units from which E.A.M. supporters had been eliminated. The E.A.M. demanded that these troops should be demobilised at the same time as their E.L.A.S. guerrillas, and the new Commander-in-Chief of the Regular Army, General Othonaios, refused to assume his duties until this had been done. He also insisted upon the dismissal of General Ventiris, the Chief of Staff, who was a persistent opponent of the E.A.M. But under Right wing pressure the Government refused to dispose of the two special volunteer formations. At the moment when the crisis was at its height, an "E.A.M. conspiracy" was discovered which could justify British intervention. General Scobie thereupon accused the E.A.M. of preparing a *coup d'état*, and threatened to use British troops to prevent it. Professor Svolos, the moderate and universally respected E.A.M. leader, refuted the charge, declaring that E.A.M. had led the fight for unity and would not be the first to break it. The intrigue failed. The equilibrium has again been restored. But for how long?

Poland's Last Chance

The exiled Government of Poland is passing through a crisis which may decide the fate of its country. It began last week with the resignation of M. Mikolajczyk who has laboured for many months with patience and moderation to bring about an understanding with Moscow. At last he despaired of inducing his Cabinet to accept the compromise which he had drafted. The Socialists under M. Kwapinski were in tow with the reactionaries who follow the lead of General Sosnkowski. Neither group will consent, while the war lasts, to any cession of what was Polish territory in 1939. The last straw was a resolution in the wider Polish National Council censuring M. Grabski, the leader of the National Democrats, who supports the Premier's conciliatory policy. Another factor which discouraged the Moderates was the refusal of the American Government to promise that it will guarantee the integrity of post-war Poland. The President, M. Rackiewicz, who is himself in the camp of the irreconcilables, promptly accepted M. Mikolajczyk's resignation and called on M. Kwapinski to form a new Cabinet. He failed, and M. Arciszewski, another so-called Socialist, is trying his hand, without Peasant Party backing. His success would destroy the last chance of any agreement with Moscow, and the Lublin Committee would be left in sole possession, under Russian patronage, of liberated Poland. It is not easy to fathom the folly of the extremists. They cannot believe that the Western Allies will break with Russia on their account. They have sad memories of the past and recent deportations by the Lublin Committee have increased their bitterness. But they must know that the Poles will never recover the territory they once conquered from Russia and have now relinquished to her, nor is their claim to it sound on ethnographical grounds. They will henceforth have to adjust their foreign policy to hers. They can never again play the double game of a "buffer State," nor dance on a tight rope stretched between Berlin and Moscow. But if they can bring themselves to face their future with sober realism, they may hope to live in a free Poland again. Even that prospect will be endangered if this crisis should end in the victory of the intransigents.

The "Fifth Freedom" Dispute

The International Conference on Civil Aviation has run into a fresh snag, and the atmosphere at Chicago is being thickened by complaints voiced loudly in the American Press that Britain is trying to back out from agreements to which her delegation had virtually given its assent. The course of these involved negotiations, conducted partly behind closed doors, is difficult to follow; but, so far as we can judge, there was, first, Anglo-American agreement on what has become known as the "fifth freedom" of the air, that is, the right of operators to pick up and set down passengers in intermediate countries on an international route. Denial of this freedom would mean, of course, that on some sections of international routes aircraft would be flying with much less than their economical load. Next, Lord Swinton, somewhat surprisingly, seems to have agreed to a compromise which the Canadian delegate put forward in an endeavour to bridge the divergence between British and American attitudes on the question of national traffic quotas. The compromise, which has received the title of the "escalator" clause, provided that on international routes each nation which desired to operate air lines should receive a traffic quota, but that any air line which could prove that, over a given period, it had flown with 65 per cent. or more of its capacity occupied, should be allowed to increase the number of its aircraft in operation. British agreement to this compromise, it seems, was given on the understanding that the clause would apply only to the whole length of an international route. The Americans, however, are now arguing that it should apply not merely to the whole route, but to any section of it. If this policy were adopted, it would mean that on the route, say, from New York to Vienna via Prestwick and Paris, the American quota between Prestwick and Paris could be increased by the "escalator," even though through traffic from New York to Vienna or vice versa were insufficient to fill 65 per cent of the capacity of the aircraft flying. The moral to be drawn from the whole conference is increasingly clear: unless and until aircraft are internationally owned and operated, there will never be an end to international disputes.

Teachers' Salaries

The unification of basic salary scales for teachers in all types of publicly supported schools is surely an essential part of the reform by which it is proposed to abolish class-distinction in the State system. (It is a misfortune that the so-called public schools are not to be brought into line; but that is a very different question.) There is not, as some of our correspondents seem to suppose, any analogy between differentiation in salaries between administrative and clerical grades in the Civil Service and differentiation between secondary and primary schools—that is, between teachers of older and younger children. It is not an easier or less skilled job to teach younger children well. Inevitably, the transition from a system under which the primary teachers have been treated as inferiors to one of equal status raises great practical difficulties; but these must not be allowed to stand in the way of the change being made. We agree that special consideration should be given to those possessing higher qualifications, in whatever schools they teach; but we do not agree that the possession of a University degree, irrespective of its quality, makes a good dividing line. A University graduate is not necessarily any better qualified than, say, a Froebel trainee; and the graduate's qualification works out most unfairly in relation to art teachers, physical training teachers, and many other special groups. Length of training and the provision of *any* suitable kind of special qualification are much better criteria. We agree that the reward for such qualifications should be substantial—more so than the Burnham Committee proposes; but we believe the case to be at least partly met by the payments for "special responsibility," which will presumably go in most cases to the better qualified teachers. By all means let the secondary teachers agitate for (*a*) better pay for the highly qualified (but not only for graduates), and (*b*) for a greater sum for payments for "special responsibility"; but let them not, in framing these legitimate claims, endanger the revolution which is being accomplished for the main body of teachers. Some day, perhaps, Universities will be equipped to provide degrees for all teachers in all ranges of subjects; but they are not so equipped to-day, and the greatest practical need is to improve the quality and prestige of the training colleges, and to increase the length of the normal training college course, while doing all that can be done at the same time to expand University facilities.

The Housing Tangle

How much power is Mr. Duncan Sandys to have to clear up the housing muddle? His close contacts with Mr. Churchill give him perhaps a better chance of getting adequate powers than his unfortunate predecessors, who have been faced with a most unfortunate division of authority, between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Town and Country Planning, and the Ministry of Works and Buildings. Temporary housing, which is the province of the last of them, cannot be dealt with effectively apart from permanent housing, to which the Ministry of Health clings obstinately, or from land and planning, which belong to the Ministry of Town and Country Planning. The arrangements for temporary housing are in a mess. There is confusion over the priority to be given as between rebuilding of badly damaged houses and erection of new houses, temporary or permanent. Nor does any priority appear to have been laid down as between houses and schools, which the Ministry of Education, in a circular and memorandum issued last week, is urging local authorities to get on with as speedily as possible. Mr. Churchill's touchy evasions on Tuesday still do not reveal whether Mr. Sandys is to be given power to handle these issues. He can hardly be set over Mr. Willink or Mr. Morrison as co-ordinator, and his relation to Lord Woolton, who is responsible for continuing repairs of war damage, is not obvious.

Election Strategy

Mr. Churchill's new broom at Tory Headquarters has not taken long to raise political dust. In a speech at Nottingham last week-end, Mr. Assheton told his audience, first, that the general election might be held "in May, if not sooner" and, secondly, that the Prime Minister's four-year plan for the post-war period would probably be presented to the country by "a National Government comprising the best men in all Parties." Does this mean that Mr. Churchill is having second thoughts about the time-table and procedure which he recently outlined to Parliament? He then forecast an ending to the European War some time between spring and early summer, after which a stop-gap Conservative Government would hold office for some three months before the election was held. If Mr. Assheton is reflecting Mr. Churchill's mind, it now looks as if the Tories had the bright idea of giving the stop-gap Government a "National" façade by enlisting under its banner some figures from other Parties. The device, we fancy, would be too transparent to make much impression on the electorate. More serious are the implications of Mr. Assheton's suggestion that the election may be held before May. On the face of it, there are no indications that the war will end sooner than Mr. Churchill recently estimated. Are we to conclude that Tories are now toying with the notion of a "khaki" election, as soon, say, as the Rhine is crossed, in the flush of imminent final victory? Or was it merely the intention of the Conservative Party Chairman to break the news that Parliament, in its final session, will not be asked to pass any substantial legislation dealing with the post-war period? Despite the contingent promises of Bills in the King's Speech, Mr. Churchill on Wednesday said nothing to dispel that impression. In that event, not merely will precious time be wasted and the economic muddle following the end of hostilities accentuated, but the election itself will take the lamentable form of an auction in social benefits.

PARLIAMENT: Ring in the New . . .?

Wednesday, noon.

As it sometimes does, question time on Tuesday—the last day of the old Session—provided a microcosm of almost all the most pressing social, political, and economic problems of the day. A vast variety of subjects was dealt with: alleged misbehaviour by Italian co-operators (a charge vigorously rebutted by Grigg, by the Tory Sir Reginald Blair, and by Ivor Thomas, who reminded the House that there was "no such word as vendetta in the English language"); prams, children's boots, and "austerity overcoats"; factory plans for development areas; an allegedly anti-Soviet speech by a British general in Cairo; Army pay and allowances in India; and Hansard (to which 56 per cent. of public libraries now subscribe).

The Prime Minister was at first a trifle hesitant and uncertain. During one answer he stopped, said "I must reconstruct my sentence," and began again. Shinwell, however, pricked him into flaring wrath by a series of sidelong digs at the appointment of Sandys to the Ministry of Works. When Shinwell asked why it had been necessary—wasn't there already a Minister responsible to the Commons for the Ministry of Works?—Churchill leaned towards him over the despatch-box and hissed: "The honourable gentleman knows the answer as well as I do . . . and he can say it as well as I can." When Shinwell asked ironically for a Minister specially to "disentangle" the various responsibilities of Ministers concerned with reconstruction, Churchill snapped, "That is rather a silly question to ask, and very much below the Parliamentary level which the honourable gentleman is always endeavouring to attain." By now the Prime Minister was in his happiest form again: he turned from Shinwell, smacking his lips, with a bland "Anybody else?"

In view of the subject to which they were obliquely directed, these pleasantries embarrassed the Tories. Members generally are dumbfounded by the promotion of the Prime Minister's son-in-law—"the clearest case since the later Roman Empire," said one cynic, "of official recognition of pure merit."

Herbert Morrison has on his hands two tussles with Tories. One group are particularly interested in a recent remand-home incident, their interest being perhaps enhanced by the opportunity that this affords to have a dig at the L.C.C. Two others want to go to France, and are raising on the adjournment next week Morrison's refusal to allow them to.

His Majesty's Most Gracious Speech to both Houses, when the new Session began on Wednesday, was full of the usual vague, benevolent aspirations. "Beveridge" legislation was intended, "as opportunity serves." Rationing will go on "so long as there is any scarcity," and "My Ministers" will "try to create conditions favourable to the expansion of our export trade . . . and to maintain a high level of food production at home." The speech ended with a prayer for the Divine blessing on Members' counsels; they felt that it might well be needed.

Pontifex Minor

MUTUAL AID AND EXPORTS

Two White Papers issued this week reveal Britannia with her own trumpet, quite legitimately and decorously, at her lips. One, summarising Britain's war effort, reveals some statistics hitherto unpublished—shipping losses totalling nearly 12 million gross tons, aggregate output of aircraft, tanks and certain other categories of munitions since 1939. The chief purpose, however, which the White Paper seeks to attain, and succeeds in attaining is to present an over-all picture of a nation geared-up very highly to "total" war—an impressively high proportion of its population mobilised for the Services, industry or agriculture; its consumption both of food and, still more, of clothing and household goods severely restricted; and its wartime growth in individual incomes offset to a large extent by increased taxation.

All things considered, this is no mean record; and its publication in this comprehensive form should help to correct the impression, still prevalent in parts of the U.S.A., that Britain has pulled less than her full weight in the war. Equally helpful, in this direction, is the other White Paper (supplemented by President Roosevelt's report to Congress), in which the figures are given of Britain's Mutual Aid to all countries up to June, 1944. The total on that date amounted to just over $4 billions, of which about $2.4 billions had been allocated to U.S. Forces. This compares with some $28 billions' worth supplied by the U.S.A., but, apart from the fact that conversion of prices at the official dollar pound parity is believed to result in an understatement of the volume of Britain's contribution, there are large and growing supplies from India and the Dominions for the Pacific war not yet fully taken into account.

Comparisons in cash between Allies' efforts in a common war are conspicuously odious; and President Roosevelt pays generous tribute to Britain's unstinted contribution to the "joint stockpile of brains" from which emanated the material means to victory. Radar, Bailey Bridge, the famous "Mulberry" ports, the jerricans which fuelled General Bradley's tanks in their dash across France, the special sparking plugs for aircraft, the jet-propelled fighter—all these and many other purely British inventions were put freely at the disposal of the U.S. Chiefs of Staff.

Let us hope that Congress will be favourably impressed. We are in no position to forego continuance of Lend-Lease for some time ahead; but the conditions under which Mutual Aid from the U.S.A. is provided to Britain have been a big factor in the decline of British exports, now less than 30 per cent. in volume of their 1938 level. Naturally enough, American opinion would be intolerant of any suggestion that we should re-export commercially goods shipped to us on Lend-Lease terms; but the present agreement, whereby we undertake not to export goods *of a similar kind* to those received by us in Mutual Aid is harshly restrictive. On this question Lord Keynes is reported to have had lengthy talks with the State Department during his latest visit to Washington. The results will be of vital importance to the immediate future of Britain's export trade. A commonsense solution, which might commend itself to Congress, would be to free British goods from Mutual Aid restrictions in export markets provided that American materials did not represent more than a stated proportion of their "finished" value.

THE TWO MAQUIS

[*The author of this article is a Professor at Brussels University, an Editor of* Le Peuple *and a Member of the Belgian Parliament.*]

The surprising rapidity of Belgian Liberation was unquestionably due to the tactical and strategic skill of the Allied Generals. These Generals, however, themselves recognised that their advance could not have been so rapid if it had not been helped by the men of the Belgian Maquis. Many communiques have testified to this. Thus the crossing of the Meuse was considerably accelerated by the bold operations carried out by Belgian partisans at the instance of the Allied Command. It was the same at Antwerp. It is amazing that the enemy had to abandon one of the greatest ports in the world without a pitched battle. Antwerp, with its twenty-two miles of quays, which every day can accommodate hundreds of ships of all sizes was captured in a few hours, with all its modern harbour installations and its electricity supply in perfect order. This was due to the bravery and initiative of the Maquis, who removed the demolition charges intended to destroy the port. It was also the Maquis who prevented the destruction of many bridges essential to troop movements.

General Eisenhower has already paid a tribute to the invaluable help which the Maquis gave his soldiers. There were in Belgium, at the moment of Liberation, eight resistance groups which had co-ordinated their work under a central committee. These groups were recruited from all classes of society. There were some among them, however, who were more markedly affected by certain ideologies. This was especially so in the case of the *Front de l'Indépendance,* in which the Communists exercised a leading influence. Nobody, however, in Belgium could claim a monopoly of patriotism. A glance at the list of thousands of murdered patriots belonging to all professions is sufficient to convince one of this.

I have been able to check in the constituency which I represent the work of one of these groups, all of whose members I knew personally. It was led by men the oldest of whom was thirty-two. On its committee were a schoolmaster, a dentist, a medical student, a works manager, some postmen, metal workers and railwaymen. I had often met the young men in public meetings before the war. Then they hardly attracted any attention. They were timid; they never spoke. They have scarcely changed—except that each of them has to his credit a great number of daring exploits.

For their work the Maquis needed money, food and arms. These young men used simply to stop a bank messenger in the street. They then invited him to go and have a drink. He would offer no resistance. It is possible that he even secretly rejoiced in this adventure. Four times they had raided the local Post Office which was guarded by gendarmes. To get food the Maquis delivered attacks on the neighbouring farmers. If they proved recalcitrant, the women of the Maquis went in broad daylight and burnt the stocks of the least co-operative farmer. Next day his colleagues were more accommodating.

For coal, the rail workers belonging to the Maquis held up trains in a deserted spot in the countryside. The men and women in the Maquis captured the engine and emptied it of its fuel. For sugar, the partisans made holes with gimlets in the sides of the trucks. The railway workers in my district derailed the *Mitropa* Express when it was travelling at 50 miles an hour. There is not much more to be said about that. There is not much more to be said about the passengers either. The postmen kept back all correspondence addressed to the German authorities or their confederates. In going through this they discovered traitors whom they denounced and executed. The usual method was to deliver a registered letter, which in Belgium must be accepted personally by the addressee. This avoided judicial errors. . . .

Soon after the Liberation of Belgium, General

Eisenhower asked the Maquis to surrender their arms. Since the Pierlot Government had to renew this demand a few weeks later, it seemed that the original request had not been effective. It was then that the conflict broke which resulted in the bloody demonstrations in Brussels on the 25th November, 1944, in the course of which forty-five demonstrators and fifteen policemen were wounded. Before this regrettable incident, General Erskine, Head of the Allied Military Mission in Belgium, had published a declaration in which he said that the Allied forces would help to maintain order in the event of trouble. It is still not known, even now, whether General Erskine made this demand on his own responsibility or at the request of the Belgian Government. That it was the latter, was claimed by the Socialist paper *Le Peuple* on 23rd November. The bloody demonstration in Brussels was preceded by the resignation of the two Communist Ministers and M. Démany who represented the *Front de l'Indépendance* in the Government.

The Maquis did not refuse to surrender its arms. It demanded incorporation as a whole in the regular army with its own officers. It also demanded more rapid and vigorous repression of the traitors and collaborators.

The resistance leaders were not unaware that the men whom they had led into battle would have to submit to a new training to be able to take part in modern warfare. But the professional officers, who during the campaign of 1940 had not all distinguished themselves by exceptional bravery, resented this intrusion into the army of elements steeled by hard experience of the underground struggle. Above all they saw among the new officers, who had been so intrepid in the Underground, dangerous tendencies which might hamper their own careers. Moreover, the Resistance movement consisted of young men with a new vision, who desired a radical reform of economic and social life. Above all, they wished to expropriate the property of traitors, the fortunes of those who had supplied the enemy or who had enriched themselves in the Black Market. They did not wish that the audacious deflationary policy, so well begun by M. Gutt, should fall only on the shoulders of people who were hoarding bank notes. They wished also that those who had been sufficiently astute to convert their bank notes into jewels or real estate should suffer with the rest. Isolated groups of the Maquis carried out raids on farms whose owners refused to supply food to the famished population. At this point the second Maquis, a whole conspiracy of sordid and illicit interests, made its appearance.

Nothing was left undone to discredit the Resistant movements. There is no doubt that during the period of confusion which followed Liberation, all sorts of dubious people slipped in amongst the true patriots. There were common criminals, fugitives from justice, and ex-fascists who wormed their way into the ranks of the Partisans and thus gave them a bad name. This was deliberately planned. There were excesses and abuses; arbitrary arrests, illegal searches and private commandeering. But such isolated incidents could never justify the mud-slinging at all those men and women who had given so much proof of their idealism. The fury shown by the Partisans in their demands for the exemplary punishment of traitors encouraged the underhand and criminal schemes of the second Maquis. This generous impatience of the Maquis was perhaps not always justified. It was necessary to revive in Belgium sixteen courts-martial, with numerous Boards and their Appeal Tribunals; necessary to find many honest Magistrates who would scrupulously exercise their power. Forty thousand people were arrested; of these twenty-five have already been condemned to death, but only two have been executed. For the condemned have recourse to the right of Appeal and claim the jurisdiction of the Court of Cassation. And that takes a lot of time.

However that may be, up to the present not a single great industrialist who has helped the enemy has been condemned. The greater part of those who were arrested have been released. It is doubtful whether Belgian workers will work with much enthusiasm so long as they are obeying the orders of such unworthy citizens. One of the Resistance leaders told me that the Maquis groups have declared many hundreds of millions of old bank notes to meet the deflationary measures. It is not surprising that part of this money should come from the industrial collaborators who thus provide themselves with an alibi and a second dossier in case of being brought before the Tribunals on a charge of helping the enemy. It is unbelievable that these bad citizens who have made shells to kill Allied soldiers should be indirectly maintained by these very soldiers.

Newspapers whose funds are suspect have appeared or been revived. The Pierlot Government itself recognises that it cannot maintain this equivocal position. The Socialists, who supported it, have decided in their meeting of the 26th November only to continue in this course if the Belgian war effort is greatly intensified; by organising State control of vital productions, by nationalising basic industries, by abolishing trusts and by expropriating traitors and collaborators. If the Pierlot Government does not do this, it will have to hand over its authority to a Cabinet which will rally all democratic elements.

Granted drastic emergency powers by Parliament, M. Pierlot was faced with a strike called by the new trade union movement born of the Liberation. The strike, disapproved by the Socialist and Christian Democrat Trade Unions, was not a great success Belgians want order—without foreign interference—and they want to give every support to the war effort. M. Pierlot also now promises an early Bill to tax war profits and the establishment of a Central National Council for the different Resistance groups. The course of the crisis will show whether these concessions have been made too late.

ARTHUR WAUTERS

THE SERVICE VOTE

It seems clear that in spite of Mr. Churchill's earlier promise, the Tories contemplate an early election while the bulk of the armed forces are still serving overseas. As matters stand at present, the overwhelming majority of these forces will not know the candidates standing, the constituencies in which their appointed proxies will vote, or the issues before the electors. More, the minority, aware of the election issues, will only be able to explain them to their colleagues at the risk of offending existing Forces regulations.

The electoral machinery that appears to be envisaged is open to many objections. The Speaker's Conference on Electoral Reform stepped out of its terms of reference and recommended the automatic registration of the service voter. The placid rejection of this suggestion and the throwing of the onus of registration upon the soldier is bewildering. Every Command has the address of the next of kin of men serving within its jurisdiction. It is not an insuperable task to provide this information to the Registrar in this country. Again, the proxy vote system is surely an unnecessary innovation. The ballot boxes should be taken to the men. In commands like Paiforce and the Middle East this could be easily achieved, and the recent American elections showed this could be done even under more difficult circumstances. Registration officers were dropped by parachute and collected the votes of men in the front line isolated from the main body of troops. Provided a longer period than hitherto is allowed to elapse between nomination day and polling day, and provided constituency maps are prepared now for distribution for overseas commands, every serving man could vote in the field, knowing the name and party of the candidates in his home constituency. The proxy vote system does not ensure the serving man a vote. All it does is to ensure two votes for the appointed proxy. The unpopularity of the system is revealed by the large number of men who, when filling in a registration form in this country, refused to appoint a proxy should they, before the election, be posted overseas.

No electoral machinery, however, will be of real use unless the serviceman is fully aware of the electoral issues at stake. Men who have served three or four years overseas are out of touch with home problems. They have not access to the national daily papers. The foreign press available to them is only too often doctored to conform with local interest, and the service papers, with a few notable exceptions, deliberately avoid the presentation of policies on party lines. The talks the B.B.C. sends out are rarely heard; the one wireless set a unit usually possesses is invariably put into the crowded and noisy N.A.A.F.I. And the overseas serviceman, unlike his colleagues at home, has no opportunity to attend the public meetings of political parties.

One of the most effective ways for the men to know the political views being contested is for M.P.s of all parties to visit them. Noel Coward and George Formby have found no difficulty in entertaining thousands overseas. A group of M.P.s putting the case of their respective parties would receive as warm a welcome as any Ensa show yet sent abroad. Party conferences will soon be over and programmes laid down. A six months' tour by some groups of M.P.s explaining these programmes is little enough for the overseas forces to demand.

In addition the service papers should begin now to allocate space to the political parties, even as wireless time is allocated at an election. Inoffensive articles claiming to be factual, such as are provided frequently at the moment, may satisfy the authorities but have never satisfied the men. It is hoped, too, that the political parties are not overlooking the preparation of propaganda films for distribution to the travelling film units and the camp cinemas. More wireless sets should also be sent out so that many of the men abroad can have the opportunity of listening to political broadcasts from home. The shortage of sets makes listening rooms or tents, as are often found here, almost impossible overseas. If only one set is available Vic Oliver will always have precedence over Shinwell.

It is not the hectic month before polling day that must only be considered. Intelligent consideration and discussion is needed now. The introduction of compulsory discussion groups within service time is going apace in this country, but is as yet almost unknown abroad. Active service conditions may cause difficulties on occasions, but there is no apparent reason why discussion within service time could not be immediately introduced into the overseas Supply Commands. A major obstacle to free discussion among the forces, as the fate of the Cairo Forces Parliament demonstrated, is not an organisational difficulty: it is the King's Regulation 541. This regulation (and the corresponding R.A.F. K.R. 1092 and the Navy K.R. 17A and 18) can be interpreted to prevent any serviceman putting forward publicly the point of view of any particular party. It is sufficiently embracing to make a serving man liable to a charge if he passed on a few Labour Party pamphlets to a serving colleague. At home, a liberal Air Ministry may turn a Nelson's eye to a regulation that, if applied, would throttle all discussion groups. But the Brigadier Blimps of Cairo have exploited the regulation to the full. The rule needs serious amending if the overseas serviceman is not to be debarred from forming a considered view as to the political policy he desires to support.

The Prime Minister has said that it would be a disgraceful thing if through any lack of foresight the troops were deprived of the opportunity to understand the policies of the opposing candidates, and of recording their votes on the largest possible scale. As yet there are few signs of the required foresight being shown. The armies of Liberation are virtually disfranchised in their home country.

A LONDON DIARY

It had crossed my mind when Mr. Stettinius went to the State Department that he was perhaps being groomed as successor to Mr. Hull. In spite of the fact that he comes from Big Business and has no long experience in foreign affairs, he has considerable qualifications for the post. That he is not just the usual steel magnate is clear from his work in introducing an 8-hour day. He has the knack of making himself popular and is something of a wizard in managing Senators and Congressmen. When he did his big job on Lend-Lease he took infinite pains to meet criticisms and answer awkward questions; he would meet groups of sceptical legislators, frankly give them the facts, thank them for their interest and ask them to ask more questions. They loved it. That, as an American friend said to me, is the right technique for overcoming the problem which the Fathers set modern America when they "separated the powers." Mr. Stettinius will not carry the high moral authority of Mr. Hull, but neither will he be so sensitive to criticism or so reluctant to face the new kind of politics that emerge from this war. Whether he has the necessary imaginative grasp remains to be seen.

* * *

Sidney Hillman, who will soon be in London for the preparatory meetings of next year's World Trade Union Conference, is the first leader with the stature of a statesman who has risen from the ranks of the American workers. I have heard much to his credit; one of the most interesting accounts of him came from a friend who many years ago met him for the first time among a number of guests, and was left wondering who this remarkable man was. He guessed that he was an economist of a very rare type who had taken the trouble to learn at first-hand intimate and important facts about the lives of the workers whom economists usually discuss only in terms of statistics. Actually Sidney Hillman started life as a manual worker and an emigrant from Lithuania; he made himself an "intellectual," a man who thinks and theorises. He is also a man of action and a remarkable organiser. His generalship in welding the once sweated and scattered workers of the clothing trade into a great industrial union recalls Mr. Bevin's early services to the transport workers. But he did some things that no English labour leader has done. He made a scientific study of the clothing trade, and after victory in a series of hard-fought strikes, so impressed the employers by his ability that they often allowed him to suggest the improvements in organisation which would enable them to pay the highest wages he had won. No less original was his work in building up an educational organisation within his Union. Its first job is to interest the young recruits, often Jewish boys and girls, whose command of English is slight.

* * *

As the founder of a powerful industrial Union Hillman naturally went with the C.I.O. when its leaders broke with the narrow craft unionism of the A.F. of L. He has done his full share of fighting, usually against the arch-conservatives of the American Labour Movement and on occasion against the Communists also. But his is primarily a positive and constructive mind, and on this side of the Atlantic we should not class him as a man of the Left. He is on intimate terms with the President and has played a great part in industrial conciliation during the war. Recently as the founder of the C.I.O.'s Political Action Committee, he has swung into the front line of national politics. It made Labour the decisive power in the election: its reward will be the survival of the New Deal and perhaps its further growth. Its success has again set observers asking the perennial question: Will American Labour ever set up house for itself as an independent political party? Hillman, as I read his character, is not the man to hurry on such a development.

The decision of Mr. Loverseed, M.P., to leave Common Wealth and join the Labour Party, combined with various press remarks about the Labour Executive refusing a Common Wealth request for affiliation, have led some people, (including Mr. Davenport in our correspondence columns) to assume that Common Wealth is dead. This is a premature deduction. Conversations between Common Wealth and the Labour Executive have been proceeding, and various possibilities have been considered. The matter will no doubt come up before the Labour Party Conference. I do not expect affiliation to be the outcome, but I am not at all sure that Common Wealth will for that reason fade out. It could, of course, never compete with the main parties once the truce was over; but it has a good organisation and a keen, if comparatively small, membership, and it has a special appeal to many people who have been converted by events to Socialism (or at any rate to anti-Conservatism) but who are not prepared to vote Labour. This category includes, I think, quite a number of soldiers as well as technicians and suburban voters. Why shouldn't the Labour Party take off the ban against speaking on Common Wealth platforms? Why not allow Common Wealth candidates to stand, unopposed, for seats where Labour has never had a chance of winning, and where the Labour Party organisation has become moribund? It would be a complete error to argue that if Common Wealth were killed, then all its supporters or potential supporters would vote Labour instead. It offers a political niche for a number of voters who would not be happy elsewhere, and if Labour is wise it will regard them as allies and allow them their own channel of political expression.

* * *

When I first read that four boys at Aachen had shot at Allied soldiers I wondered that so much fuss was made. If in 1940 the Germans had invaded this country and British children had shot at them, I feel sure that many English people would have regarded their action as a magnificent example of bull-dog courage. In any case in comparison with Maidenek and the horrors of the Eastern front the Germans have fought without atrocities in the West. This example of youthful indiscipline is therefore an odd peg for a new Vansittart sermon and an extraordinary campaign in the *Daily Mirror*. But now it appears that the whole story was a mare's nest! Careful newspaper correspondents who enquired before sending the picture and the story of these young criminals, discovered that no court-martial was even contemplated and their messages compared oddly with the sensational accounts in newspapers which prejudged the whole case and reported eye-witness reports that proved to be wholly unreliable. Actually the boys, after the manner of boys everywhere, found an abandoned machine-gun and fired it into a sandbank. It is disturbing that the Army authorities should have sponsored this story. I wonder why papers that were in all good faith mis-led do not think it worth while to correct their error and so win their readers' confidence. After all there are so many real German atrocities, that they need not fear we should be led astray by the truth.

* * *

Now that Local Education Authorities are charged, under the Butler Act, with a definite obligation to provide for the "under 5's," I hope there will be no parsimony in this supremely important initial stage of schooling. Unless the Board of Education insist on high standards both in buildings and specially trained teachers for Nursery Schools, our Primary Education will continue to be handicapped by having to cope with an intake, at 5, of a deplorably high percentage of children in whom all sorts of preventible defects—physical, mental and moral—have been allowed to develop. For all who are interested in the "under 5" problem I recommend a visit to the fascinating exhibition which the Nursery Schools Association is holding at the Park Crescent, Regent's Park. The Association has always recognised that the schooling of very small children demands not merely the right teachers but the active co-operation of parents. It has demonstration models on view of the equipment and toys (many made by "old lags" in H.M. Prisons, by the way) which experience has shown to work well in stimulating curiosity, enterprise and the first beginnings of "social" sense. Wherever else economy is practised, it will not, I hope, be in this vital stage of education. Wasn't it Barrie who once said: "Nothing matters that happens to us after five"?

* * *

Though two centuries of progress have made the wars and tortures of the eighteenth century seem somewhat anæmic to our more robust age, it remains true that no one has yet given a more faithful description of modern Europe than Voltaire. There is a parallel for most of contemporary events in *Candide*. The *Times* of Tuesday last added an item in the catalogue of historical repetition that I had not expected. You will recall how surprised Candide and his friends were to find themselves dining one night in company with six kings who had lost their thrones in various wars and revolutions, and who were on their way (incognito) to celebrate the Carnival at Venice? Well, it seems that there is shortly to be a similar gathering in Spain. The Archduke Otto has already arrived in Portugal; he is soon to meet the Comte de Paris and, if the conditions of the Franco-Spanish frontier permit, to join up with the Pretender of Portugal, Dom Duarte Duno and the Infante Don Juan, pretender to the Spanish throne. The French Pretender, we are told, last summer forgathered with the Pretender to the Brazilian throne. This time the rendezvous is believed to be, not the carnival at Venice (unavoidably postponed), but Seville, where on December 18 Don Pedro of Orleans is to marry a Bourbon Princess. If the state of her health permits Amelia, ex-Queen of Portugal, will also be present. Lest we should imagine that any political significance could be attached to these gatherings, it is explained that the Archduke came from America on his own initiative, is at present staying with a well-known monarchist family and may later get into touch with Allied Governments with a view to issuing a manifesto to the Austrian people. No such decision has yet been taken. I hope all this is only funny.

* * *

Mr. Cecil King, who, as Director and deputy-chairman of Sunday Pictorial Newspapers, knows what he is talking about, was quite right in saying in a recent lecture at University College that much of Dickens and Trollope could not be published without grave risk under the present interpretation of the law of libel. If the Uriah Heeps of this world are to be exposed, Mr. King is right in saying that an effort must be made after the war to alter the law of libel. He suggests that it should be brought into line with the law of slander, under which the plaintiff must prove actual damage. This would rule out a large number of bogus actions and blackmailing threats. I doubt, however, whether the change would be sufficient to enable newspapers to expose many scandals in the City and in local government, for instance, that are now too dangerous to touch. On the other hand we do not wish the sort of Press freedom that made some Paris newspapers before the war into sheets of personal scandal. Authors, editors and newspaper proprietors ought very carefully to consider a joint policy and prepare a Bill for Parliament.

* * *

Changes of Army slang mark changes in mood, and they usually tend as war goes on to become increasingly cynical. "Scrounge" in the last war, for instance, became "make" or "win," and in the early stages of this war if you got extra leave or petrol or rations you were said to have "organised" them. The latest variant I have heard was in a conversation in a train where a soldier opposite said to his friend: "That's a fine coat you have. Where did you liberate that?"

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to K. R. S.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The coiffure seen in the accompanying picture was designed to represent the "warring nations." The bold upward sweep on the side of the head typified Britain's sturdy resistance and recovery; on the opposite side a long falling roll illustrated German decline. The United States was symbolised in the design, and curls represented the smaller Allied nations.—*Derby Evening Telegraph.*

Fourteen years ago Mrs. B. took her own sick son to Lourdes. "He was not cured," she said, "but Our Lady of Lourdes did not forget him. He died suddenly on her Feast Day."—*Dorset Daily Echo.*

With this Beveridge scheme providing for every loafer and waster in the country, it will be a job to get anyone to do the work."—Report of speech at Barnstaple R.D.C. in *North Devon Journal-Herald.*

WHY SO MANY ?

THE Tory Reform Committee has just published a booklet entitled *To-morrow's Children* on the population question. The facts to which it refers are by now sufficiently familiar. The birth-rate has diminished, is, with the exception of a slight increase during the war, diminishing and ought, in the opinion of the authors, to be increased. In 1870 it was 34 per 1,000; during the 30's it was 15, and has on occasion sunk below 15. In 1943 it was slightly over 16.5. We may no longer hope for an increase; but we might, the authors think, stabilise at the present figure. Even to do this, however, we must raise the present net reproductive rate from 0.75 to 1; that is to say, every woman who dies from now onwards must be replaced by one girl child surviving to maturity. If the present birth and death rates remain constant we must face the prospect of a decline in population which, beginning in 1960 or 1970, will thereafter continue with increasing momentum. Sensational figures have been quoted; for example, that in rather less than 200 years' time the population of Great Britain will have sunk to six millions, the figure incidentally at which it has stood through most of our history.

The causes of decline are also familiar. Broadly, they are the fact that children who must now be educated (and not employed) until they are fourteen are an economic drain rather than, as in the nineteenth century, an economic asset; the entry of women into employment with a resultant later marrying age; the demand for a higher standard of life—enlisting the Drages to help one keep up with the Joneses—the full garage depending on the empty nursery and, above all, the practice and spread of birth control. One may add as more immediate causes the absence of houses to have children in and of servants and nurses to look after them. One may also add, if one likes, the spiritual malaise of an age which, having no belief in another world, seems bent on suicide in this one.

Everybody, including the authors of *To-morrow's Children*, deplores the facts as economically and politically disastrous. We are told we shall be less well off and less comfortable. "Beveridge and all the rest," says the booklet, "will be so much moonshine with a declining population, and always more coming on the pension list and fewer to the plough, the tractor and the lathe." In other words, if we become fewer and older there will be fewer of the young to do the work and more of the old for whom the work must be done, the assumption being that the old cannot do much for themselves.

A subsidiary argument is derived from the export trade. It is argued that to maintain our world position we must export a large and, if possible, increasing quantity of manufactured goods. If our workers are too few and, being too few, too well paid, we shall not be able to export enough goods, and what we do export will be too dear. We shall not, therefore, be able to "hold our own in the world's markets," our wealth will diminish and with our wealth, our comfort.

And not only our wealth and comfort but also our prestige; for here comes a new argument difficult to state because rarely clearly defined. Briefly, however, it consists in an appeal to national pride. We are a desirable people; it would, therefore, be a disaster (to whom?) if we were to die out. Therefore it is good that there should be many of us; in fact, as many as possible. Also it is not very pleasant to think that we are declining; in fact, there is something a little shameful about it. We never thought well of the French when they began to decline; what will other people think of us if we continue to follow suit? At this point the word "decadence," with all its vague implications of unstated undesirability, makes itself heard.

More familiar, perhaps, is the security argument. "The world is insecure and is likely to remain so; we are small enough as it is, and we cannot afford to grow any smaller. Has not America 130 millions? Have not the Russians 190 millions, and are not the Russians increasing like rabbits? (Incidentally, they are the only European people who are increasing.) We do not know who our next enemy may be, and we must take precautions against eventualities and maintain our strength. To sum up, we must have plenty of labour to work for us that we may be comfortable, and plenty of young men to fight for us that we may be secure."

These are, I think, the main arguments. Before I question them let me make two preliminary points. First, I protest against the tendency to regard this question as primarily, often exclusively, as a question of economics. "Economic man," disposed of elsewhere as a figment, still dominates this controversy. But besides a pocket and a stomach man has also a mind and a spirit: he begets cultures; there are, it is obvious, different qualities of life. I wish to suggest that these things, the condition of the mind and the spirit, the state of a culture, the quality of living, are also relevant. Secondly, there is the point of patriotism. To suggest that a smaller number of English might not be an unmixed disaster is usually regarded as a form of treachery. It is believed that the author of the suggestion does not love his country; this belief is a delusion. It is not axiomatic that quantity of life is more important than quality, and if there were reasons for thinking that fewer people might enjoy life at a higher intellectual, cultural and spiritual level, might, indeed, achieve a civilisation, to desire us to be fewer is to wish us not ill but well.

Since all the causes which have led to the decline of the birth rate are still, so far as I can see, operative in the present and likely to remain so in the future, it is a form of optimism and not of pessimism to try to see good in what will almost certainly happen instead of wringing our bachelor hands—I observe that at least five members of the Tory Reform Committee are either bachelors or spinsters—in impotent despair over other people's failure to have children.

It seems, in the first place, relevant to point out that the anticipated decline in the birth rate will have the effect of bringing the size of the world's population back to normality. Let us suppose that there have been human beings upon the earth for 500,000 years. For some 499,700 their growth was so slow that in the middle of the seventeenth century it has been estimated that they numbered between 400 and 500 million people. In the last 250 years they have shot up to well over 2,000 million. Consider our own case; we were 5½ million in the time of Queen Anne and 9 million in the eighteen hundreds. By the beginning of the nineteenth century we had risen to 32½ million and we are now over 45 million. Somebody has estimated that if the birth rate had remained at its Victorian level, by the time the year 2,000 was reached we should have numbered 200 million, an alarming prospect from whose realisation we are mercifully to be preserved.

For why, it may fairly be asked, should we be so many? The security argument? This surely is an anachronism. History shows that the insecure nations, the nations which are always being visited with war, are those who have been most sedulously engaged in making themselves secure on the *Si vis pacem, bellum para* principle. England, Germany, France, Russia, have during the last 300 years suffered not fewer but more wars and lost, therefore, not a smaller but a larger percentage of their population in casualties than Ireland, Sweden, Portugal or Switzerland. In any event, nations can no longer in the future rely on the number and the strength of their right arms to preserve them from war. There will be no security for any of us, strong or weak, unless we build up an international system of collective security backed by force. If we do, it will cease to matter very much whether we are strong or weak.

Nor does the argument from sentiment seem important. Arguments based on sentiment imply that you hold certain things to be valuable. Quite so, but what is the scale of values? Are we to count in terms of quantity of life or quality? For my part, I am unable to see that vitality as such is a good thing. Those who instigate pogroms, those who flog helpless persons, those who organise mass slaughter are vital, while the vitality of the financier whose fraudulent transactions beggar the thousands who have trusted him is notorious. Jesus Christ, Socrates, Beethoven, Michael Angelo, Swift and Shaw were and are all persons of exceptional vitality; but so, too, were Thersites, Torquemada, Richard III, Ivan the Terrible, Genghis Khan, Iago, Uriah Heep and Jack the Ripper. Life produces saints and squids, burgundy and bacteria. Surely, then, one must insist on quality and not merely on quantity of livingness. Now from the point of view of quality, there are obvious disadvantages about the present situation. For example, there is the differential birth rate due to birth control. Before the spread of birth control married couples of all classes had families of roughly equal size; to-day the size of the family is in inverse ratio to its ability to command education, leisure and comfort. In a recent year the births per 1,000 married men under 55 were:

Upper and middle classes	119
Skilled workmen	153
Unskilled workmen	213

The spread of birth control among all classes will even out the differential birth rate; it will also decrease the number of abortions. Yet more birth control is deplored as meaning fewer children.

But why, I repeat the question, should we be so many? Can we feed all our people? We cannot. According to Sir John Orr, in 1938 22½ million of the inhabitants of England and Wales were living on a diet below the minimum standard for health. Can we house them? We cannot; millions of our people before the war were living in slums and unhealthy tenements. Even to-day, as a recent Gallup Poll has shown, 50 per cent. of working-class houses have no indoor sanitation. Can we educate them? We cannot. Up to the age of 14, eight out of nine of us are taught 40 or 50 to a class, while after this age eight out of nine of us enjoy no education of any kind for the rest of our lives. Are we comfortable? We certainly are not. There are altogether too many of us; too many at the theatres; too many in the cinemas; too many in the streets; too many in the restaurants; too many at the telephone boxes. And because people are many and cheap we set less value upon them and grow rude, irritable and off-hand. We also grow increasingly alike. Above all, there are too many of us in the trains. "Ah, but these things," you will say, "are due to the war. Wait till the cars come back and the trains will empty soon enough." No doubt, but the cars will come back only to kill us at the rate of 6,000 a year and mutilate us at the rate of 250,000 because there are not enough roads to accommodate the number of cars. Nor can there be, without a further spreading of the towns over the countryside, a further diminution of rural and increase of suburban civilisation.

Here, of course, is the gist of the matter. A high population is the product of the predominantly urban civilisation upon which it depends. It entails the existence of the modern proletariat. Are they, then—these industrial towns and the way of life that they have forced upon their inhabitants—things to be proud of? For my part I abominate them. Indeed, I suppose that my real reason for desiring a smaller population is based upon a respect for the balanced life which entails some intercourse with nature, some knowledge of country things and pursuits. I hate, too, the specialisation of function which a highly industrialised civilisation involves.

For what is the large industrial population doing? Working as parasites of machines to produce the machine-made goods upon which the export trade depends. Concurrently agriculture is a starved and neglected industry. A large population means, then, a choice between high wages for comparatively easy work as the parasites of the machines with the choice of the cinema or the dance hall for your evenings, or a life of poverty and grinding work in the country.

My hope for the future lies in a return to a regional economy in which more of us produce more of the things that we need for ourselves. I don't suppose that such an economy will mean an increase in wealth—it might even leave us poorer—but I do think it would lead to an increase of happiness due to the fact that men were living more natural lives and expressing more of their personalities in their work. As I have come at last within hail of the economic argument, I had better conclude by taking farewell of it. It may be true that unless there are many hands to sustain production society's standard of living will be lowered. Yet in recent years the function of producing has been increasingly usurped by machines, which before the war were usurping to such effect that we had two million surplus workers upon our hands and an overplus of commodities which we were unable to consume. "The distribution of wealth was at fault, and the remedy lies in the expansion of consumption." No doubt; but it is not easy to set bounds to the increase of productivity of machines. I am reminded of a statement by Lord Keynes to the effect that "in 100 years' time the standard of life in progressive countries will be between four and eight times as high as it is to-day," and led to wonder why the proper utilisation of machines should not in the future render redundant the masses of working-class producers upon whom the wealth and comfort of the upper and middle class advocates of a high birth-rate have been wont to depend.

C. E. M. JOAD

VOCATION

It was his first rural parish. He stood in the champagne brightness of the afternoon at the lych-gate to the church. *His* church. He had never seen it before. Only this morning he had packed his bags and left the grim, dreary chapel in the East End of London for ever. His friends said that he was very fortunate, an almost raw, newly-fledged clergyman to hold such a benefice. And in that rich country, too, with a rectory that looked like a manor-house with its gables, dormers, mullioned windows, yew-trees and an ample lawn. Yes, fortunate indeed. Of course there had been some string-pulling, but what of that? He had been considered worthy.

He stood there, letting the anticipation of entering the church mount within him. He just looked and absorbed.

The exterior was typical of those solid, dignified, well-proportioned churches of these hills. It had strength and grace, neither masculine nor feminine, but hermaphroditic rather. First he saw it as a mass of grey stone, and then his eye appraised it in its living detail. The Early English tower rising against the lightly spun clouds: the gargoyles, ageless and inscrutable, yet impudent and quick with life, looking out from the coping across the wolds; the lightly balanced clerestory with its symmetry of Decorated windows. A corbel-table stretched almost around the entire building, a string-course of Rabelaisian riot. There were bestiary animals, a ribald-looking cherub, a griffin, a grinning mask, a bearded monster, and an aerial band of musicians playing upon their harps, lyres and tambourines.

He longed to rush in, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he restrained himself. Let that wait as the final supreme joy. First he would sit down, so—no, better over here on this grassy hillock—and think of his plans for the future.

How often had he dreamed of this day, and here it was, just another summer day, but one full of wonder and presage. Here were the tangible symbols that would make him representative of that middle-class culture and solidarity which one expects of the liberal professions. Already he glimpsed the idyllic life which he would lead here. Having the squire and the local gentry to tea at the rectory—with honey and the pale-blue Old Stafford (given by a maiden aunt) and flowers. Perhaps once a year he would hold a garden-fête. He would have to gather all the children together and hold social meetings and visit all his parishioners on Christmas Eve. He would give to the poor and comfort the sick and send flowers from his garden to women in travail.

He would certainly have to extend his library and perhaps take in *Country Life* and *The Tatler*. Not that he had any affinity with the sporting-parson type. Rather would he be a Woodforde or a Kilvert, or even a Hawker of Morwenstow. Then he would occasionally send letters to the *Times*—how well it would look——

Yours truly,
(Rev.) Paten Chalice,
The Rectory,
Mossway,
Loamshire.

He would of course have to make his mark in the County Archaeological Society. He had already ascertained that the last monograph on the church and village was written in 1875, and that it was incomplete and lacking in imagination. He had after all quite a knowledge of ecclesiology, and there would doubtless be much to ferret out. There would be study, and meditation in the garden, for one did not attain wisdom merely by chambering oneself with books.

He would be a servant of the people, though no doubt there would be times when the people would be *his* servants. He must above all avoid being an autocrat—leave that to the squire, should he be such a man. He would try to be a good influence on the community. He would be respected and beloved. Yes, he wanted that, not that feudal, almost superstitious regard which the labouring classes have always held for the priest and the physician. Perhaps he would even remain here for the rest of his days and his dust be absorbed by this quiet, fresh churchyard. Then no doubt the parishioners would erect a brass tablet to his memory. Perhaps it would run

To The Memory Of Paten Chalice, M.A.,
Priest And Devoted Servant of God In This
Church And Parish For Nearly Fifty Years.

He must get to know his flock, to know their weaknesses and foibles, their apathies, likes and dislikes, their virtues and vices. He himself was no disciplinarian, no fanatic. *Humanum est errare*. His sermons were neither pedantic nor prolix. He was no athlete but he could take a few wickets. A fair scholar perhaps, though he did not aspire to a bishopric merely by the translation of Greek particles. There were however some delightful deaneries in the cathedral towns which he would like to tenant. . .

Good Lord, he had almost forgotten the church. He rose and walked quickly to the western door in the tower. It was locked. Of course. The north doorway was a remnant of the original Norman fabric. Here was the chevron and billet moulding of that pious but gory age. Above the chamfered abaci of the slender columns was a tympanum in which was set a strange device, the portrayal of a queer monster, some goatish fiend, being slain by a human hunter, the parable of Good Overcoming Evil.

He opened the door.

Even as a boy the mind of Paten Chalice had been as full of piscinae and holy-water stoups as that of any Georgian antiquary or Gothic revivalist. Now his aesthetic senses took fire at the rich riot of the interior.

For a small parish church it was richly fenestrated and richly furnished. Almost the whole gamut of ecclesiastical styles was here concentrated in eight hundred years of wrought stone. His eye sought the vertical flow of the hammer-beam roof, the clerestory, the pointed arches and the capitals of the piers. Fascinated, he wandered about knowing not where to look first. There was so much detail that it seemed he would have to wander about for months before he could know it. The jambs of the windows in the south aisle were studded with the loveliest of ball-flower ornament. The font was late Norman, with a living Crucifixion sculptured by some western, obscure Castagno.

In the north aisle there was a ponderous flamboyant tomb with an effigy of a local squire of the days of William of Orange. It had the pompous, arrogant image of a man wearing the castellated wig, fine lace cravat and monkshood shoes of the snuff-taking, wenching, heavy-drinking, hedonistic squirearchs who went even to Heaven in style. To think that he, Paten Chalice, would be dining with the descendants of this moron over at the hall!

The chancel was spacious and well proportioned. Before it was a fifteenth-century oak screen with ornamental vine-leaf motifs. There was an exquisite altar-tomb beneath a trefoil-headed canopy and a quite perfect ogee arch. Then there was a triple sedilia with crockets and finials, a double-drained piscina with a foliated cusp in the spandrel, and an aumbry with its little mediaeval door and wrought-iron hinges. There were jewelled lights and Magian colours in the east window with its fragments of an early Holy Trinity. He had often wondered whether the stained-glass window was originally copied from the Eastern carpets brought back by the Crusaders.

He appraised it over and over again, now in terms of ecclesiology and now in terms of symbolism. For he was essentially of an aesthetic nature. As rubrics and ceremonial allowed he would have a few candles lighted. There was something lovely about candles, pale and radiant, burning away in homage, the little tongues of yellow flame dancing upon the altar.

His mind was becoming a mesh of imagery. The sun was sinking, and there was a strange mood of peace and quiet. The church was now a chorale of grey tones and there was a diapering of light, almost an adagio mood. He felt the sense of the past playing about him and a fit sense of continuity. The sensuality of the dim nave almost prompted him to mysticism.

What a great satisfaction it all would be, into what a heritage had he come. These things about him were symbols of the immutability of truth and goodness. He would not abuse them. He would interpret anew the Sermon on the Mount, the ethics of Christianity, human fellowship and love for tolerance, culture and the things of the spirit.

What rest, what joy, was in store for him. It was good thus. He needed it so much. It was really all he had.

For Paten Chalice did not believe in God. . . .

TUDOR EDWARDS

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GUARDIAN ANGEL

Manchester seems to have got into the hands of the *Guardian* and the *Guardian* has been keeping company with the *New Statesman*, with the result that the Manchester School has never been quite the same since.—Sir William Darling at the Manchester Publicity Association. Nov. 24th.

WHERE has *The Guardian* been straying,
The Angel guardian of Free Trade?
With whom has she been walking out?
Who took her, so to speak, a-maying?
Who sported with her in the shade,
This guardian angel gadabout?

Enchanted by what tales Arabian,
At Holborn revels of Misrule,
Has she embraced State Enterprise?
Seduced by what persuasive Fabian,
From Manchester's Commercial School,
Where once she reigned with starry eyes?

So long the venerated relic
Of Cobden, Bentham, Mill and Bright,
With whom she once kept company,
The *Guardian*, though still angelic,
Shows traces of a frolic flight—
She's been to London on the spree.

Seized with infatuated yearning,
She entered the *New Statesman's* lair,
And felt her past convictions ebb—
Since first the fatal turnstile turning,
She's left behind her *Laisser Faire*,
Enmeshed in the *New Statesman's* webb.

But why repine? her scroll diurnal
Invites the Individualist
To wider philosophic climes—
No forward-looking guardian journal
Can yield to the *Economist*,
Or dare to lag behind the *Times*.

Discarding *Nineteenth Century* notions,
At springs of economic truth,
Sip by intoxicating sip,
She takes invigorating potions,
Renewing her eternal youth
From fountains of *New Statesmanship*.

SAGITTARIUS

THE MOVIES

"Henry V," at the Carlton

"Laura," at the Empire

Henry V isn't one of the plays I should elect to see again, even in wartime. Having done it, as they say, at school, recollecting footnotes and footlights with a positive displeasure, I am content to let this brassier bit of Shakespeare slip—except for one scene, the death of Falstaff, which can be as well enjoyed from the page. Otherwise, the frolics are tedious, the affairs of State even more so, and the patriotic speeches have been rifled by politicians. I remember the clash of wood on cardboard, which even to a schoolboy, with the School Certificate looming, lacked resonance.

It is in the battle scenes that Mr. Olivier's film version comes beautifully to life. Here is the morning of Agincourt. After the long vigil, the camp fires, the bragging and whispering, reveilles sound in both camps. A French knight is lifted by rope and pulley on to his saddle; coats of mail are wriggled into, arrows tipped; with prayers over, Henry heartens his men with "O do not wish one more"; the English dig a stockade; the sky is deep blue beyond the tents on the hillside. And then the French horsemen—this is the moment we have been waiting for!—begin to move, slowly at first, restively, gathering speed, until they are in full charge. Packed in our stalls we are abreast of the leading horse. The eye changes to the English ranks, from which the approaching line is seen distantly, and when the enemy are near enough a trim cloud of arrows is released as though from a multiple bow. Confusion. The armies engage. Points are scored this way and that. The French foul, and are beaten. A crusade, an Olympic Games, is over.

This is the height of poetry in *Henry V* on the screen. Very few words have been spoken, so that the poetry is not Shakespeare's. Does that matter? *Henry V* is, by Shakespearean standards, an unpoetic play, a conscious piece of hero-worship plumped out by rhetoric; and the answer to the stage's

can this cockpit hold
The vasty fields of France? Or may we cram
Within this wooden O the very casques
That did affright the air at Agincourt?

is "No, not to-day; words that take the place of stage furniture—these do no more—don't carry so far; to touch the imagination we must *see*."

It appears to me just as reasonable to film *Henry V* as it would be disastrous to attempt to film *Lear*. Mr. Olivier's production has merits that no stage performance could match: the battle scenes, the bounce and glitter, the mere freedom of the camera while the ear must be pinned by speechmaking. It takes him, as a director, some time to get going, to change play into film; the transition from floorboards to cobbles and turf, from the Globe Theatre to Agincourt, is accomplished by gradual steps. Harfleur, with its conventional turrets and hills, comes about halfway in this (rather uneasy) metamorphosis. But slow though the beginning is, it must be admitted that Shakespeare's was much slower, and the spectacle of an Elizabethan audience relieves tedium. Mr. Olivier himself gives an excellent performance, grand in voice and in looks: St. Crispin gains from the bustle of the camp, and the monologue on kingship, delivered in the cold early hours, becomes an aside of thought and not speech. He carries the love scene off with charm, too. Among the others, I enjoyed especially Robert Newton's Pistol and Esmond Knight's Fluellen. Dresses, music (William Walton), models of old London are the best that money—£500,000—could buy. It seems a pity that the most moving passage in the play, the anecdote of Falstaff's death, should fall flat, but this loss is made up in pageantry and battle. Whether Elizabethan blank verse and screen realism can finally be reconciled I don't know. *Macbeth* would be a harder test.

Laura belongs to the more intelligent type of detective story, that which combines acerbity with its killing. I managed, probably by beginner's luck, to spot the murderer early on, but that did not affect my enjoyment of the story. The central character is a columnist whose fantastic powers—fantastic, I mean, to an English audience—enable him to be witty, rude, and eccentric. Mr. Clifton Webb gives a restrained and agreeable performance in the part; this, shall we say, is the man who *didn't* come to dinner.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

PARIS

Where there is good in the storm's heart of rage
Where in the heart of the night it is fair
The air is alcohol and misfortune courage
Windowframes broken hope still glimmers there
And from ruined walls the songs climb the air.

Never extinguished reborn from its blaze
Eternal glow of our motherland this
From Point du Jour until Père Lachaise
In August most sweet reflorescent of rose trees
Folk of everywhere the blood of Paris.

There's no *éclat* like Paris this dust under
Nothing so pure as her brow's resurgent wave
Nothing is so strong not fire nor thunder
As my Paris her dangers defiant to outbrave
Nothing so lovely as this Paris I have.

Nothing before made my heart to beat thus
Nothing my laughter with my tears so mated
As this cry of my people victorious
Nothing is so vast as a shroud torn and shed
Paris, Paris, of herself liberated.

ARAGON (translated Stephen Spender

CENSORSHIP REGULATIONS allow readers to post this paper to any part of the British Empire (excepting Eire and Northern Ireland) and to any country of the American Continent (excepting dependencies of enemy-occupied countries) but readers are advised to consult a Post Office or a newsagent before attempting to post elsewhere.

Correspondence

WESTERN UNION

SIR,—I am glad to find that I am not alone in viewing the proposed Western Union with apprehension. The *Manchester Guardian's* leading article of November 21st said, in better form, what I was trying to say. French opinion is also doubtful, and in some quarters of the Left decidedly hostile. From the meagre reports of M. Bidault's recent speech on foreign policy it is clear that if he is prepared to entertain the idea at all, it will be with modifications designed to avoid the dangers I pointed out.

Aylmer Vallance, in his reply to my article, did not face my chief anxiety. I take it that he agrees with me that there will be no need to create a permanent Western Alliance to overawe a defeated and disarmed Germany. What then, is the purpose of the proposed alliance? Against what future danger, against what Power or combination of Powers is it directed? Three giants will face each other when this war ends. Of the three the British Empire is the weakest. The case for creating a Western Union would seem to be, then, that by adding the resources and bases of our neighbours to our own, this inequality will be redressed. Not, I think, for purposes of defence and certainly not for aggression. I do not assume, as Aylmer Vallance suggests, that the Western Powers will behave with "lunacy." But the future is seen, none the less, as a chapter of history dominated by the concept of power. Awkward and perilous decisions lie ahead of us in several parts of the world, but especially in the Far East. Every sane man hopes and perhaps believes that for an indefinite period they can be settled without war. None the less, three armed giants, each with his group of client States, will dispose of the destinies of mankind by a process of bargaining, in which the counters of the game will be their relative strength in man-power, economic resources, bases and the solidity of the combinations they lead. The more we organise on a footing of alliances to further our interests, the graver will become the peril of war latent in this confrontation of forces.

There are special objections that tell against the Western Union—notably that it breaks the economic and cultural unity of Europe. But my chief reason for dreading it is that it perpetuates the old-world technique of alliances and the Balance of Power. In its first conception the Genevan League was a bold attempt to break with that unhappy heritage. Mr. Wilson saw this clearly when he argued that within the League there was no place for any alliance, save the alliance of each with all. Its root idea was to substitute third party judgment for the arbitrament of force. But if we are all tied up in alliances, any impartial decision of major issues becomes difficult, if not impossible. An ally has only one duty to his friends—to stand by them. Force is still force when it works, not by actual violence, but by the weighing of armaments and the counting of allies.

This, baldly stated, is my chief reason for distrusting any organisation of security by alliances in regions. In the present instance the objection is the stronger, because the area in which the Western Union will operate is not properly a "region" at all. It is not Western Europe, but the vast extent of the British, French and Dutch empires scattered over both hemispheres. Such a world-wide alliance as this seems to me incompatible with the universal organisation which the United Nations are pledged to create. If we constitute it we shall be torn by conflicting loyalties, and I doubt whether the Great Society of all mankind will ever come to mean much for our imaginations and affections. There is also a decisive technical reason why security can be won only by a universal organisation that covers the globe. The seas, as sailors say, are one; that aphorism applies equally to the air.

The only reason Aylmer Vallance offers for the formation of a Western military alliance confirms my fears. He says that the Western Powers would do well to "re-insure themselves . . . against possible failure of a World Authority to protect the Atlantic Region of Europe from aggression." If leading Members of the Authority start with this lack of faith in its efficacy, the chances are that it will break down. That happened to the old League. No Great Power would trust its safety to the device of collective security. Each armed for his own purposes, and relied on his own strength or on allies. The World Authority will not become a reality until we treat it as the first necessity of our existence.

In sum, then, it seems to me that the duty of progessives is to use all their influence to turn the halting draft of a world-wide Security Organisation sketched at Dumbarton Oaks into a living reality. That is no light task, for I cannot believe that it will work until we graft a true international force, a World Guard, upon it. But the division of Europe into two halves is something worse than a defiance of geography and history. It will bring discord into our own ranks, if Socialists support it, while Communists oppose it, with good reason, as a device for isolating Russia.

When Aylmer Vallance turned to the economic aspect of the Western Union, which is for him the more important, he said much with which I can agree. Certainly it would be folly if we and the French, Belgians and Dutch were to face our difficult economic future "disunitedly." The more we can combine our markets and resources, the better will our prospects be. But why must we limit our combination to the Atlantic seaboard? Every argument for planning that he advances tells equally in favour of my proposal for the creation of a general European Economic Council. The green Europe of the over-populated Eastern Borderland will stagnate in its sub-human poverty, until we plan to equip it with suitable industries and hydro-electricity, while it modernises its farming. This is an essential factor in any scheme that aims at full employment for Central and Western Europe. I wrote nothing that justifies Aylmer Vallance's suspicion that I wish to confer the "economic leadership" of Europe on Germany. On the contrary, I predicted that she will never recover her former relative strength. But to exclude her from our planning of the world's work would be to substitute vengeance for economic reason.

I am in full agreement with Miss Josephy when she argues for an organic international force as the instrument on which we rely for our security. I differ from her, for the reasons I have already given, in wishing to constitute it on a world-wide rather than a Continental footing. We should be no nearer to a lasting peace if armed continents instead of armed nations faced each other across guarded frontiers. Miss Josephy believes that Russia might favour a European Federation. The policy of the Soviet Union is to secure her safety by alliances with all the client States along her Eastern border: this is incompatible with their entry into a European Federation. What may be attainable is an integration of the economic, social and cultural life of Europe as close and intimate as any federalist could desire. I fail to understand why Miss Josephy brands functional organisation, under an Economic Council, as "the negation of democracy." If I may refer her to my *Penguin* "Our Settlement with Germany," she will find there a discussion of two alternative ways in which this Council might be placed on a representative footing.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

SIR,—There is one aspect of the idea of a Western Union which seems to deserve careful consideration by Socialists. Might not a union of the Labour and Socialist organisations of the four countries prove a practical way of turning the very vague internationalism of most Socialist speeches and declarations into something more concrete? Mr. Borkenau a year or two ago had little difficulty in showing that the so-called internationalism of the European Socialist movement had scarcely any basis in fact; since the various Labour organisations, following in the footsteps of their bourgeoisies, based themselves, and the major part of their activities, on their respective nationalities.

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Nobody is very likely to be impressed by sermons on internationalism which, in practice, the preachers deny.

A union of the Socialist movements of Britain, France, Belgium and Holland is surely, if one looks ahead (and if one means business), eminently practical politics for British Labour. The history of Russia since 1917 should have taught us that it is not enough to *make* a revolution ; it is also necessary to safeguard it. Since Britain's geographical position and economic system both make the second task an impossibility if her workers act alone, a real union between them and their immediate neighbours would appear to be wise policy. Nor need such a union stand in the way of a wider International. But the obvious difficulty about making a world-wide (or even continent-wide) International effective is that it must cover peoples with very divergent standards of living and at differing stages of social development. A Western Socialist Union would have to face no such problems.

And it is the more urgent since, as Mr. Brailsford has pointed out (*Reynolds News*, November 26th) a union of the "comfortable classes" of the four countries is already in process of formation, if not in full working order. Is it too much to hope that—the idea of "union" being now quite respectable—the British Labour Party may give a lead in this direction ? Its International Section, as it exists at present, is at best only a sideline of headquarter's activities—and is about as international-minded as a passport office. But one assumes that this is not necessarily a permanent arrangement. FRANK HORRABIN

16 Endersleigh Gardens,
Hendon, N.W.4.

THE FUTURE OF COMMON WEALTH

SIR,—The future of the Common Wealth party was always a speculation, but no one imagined that it would commit political suicide before the 1945 election. Yet, when its leader, Sir Richard Acland, demanded affiliation with the Labour Party, it was doomed. It had nothing really to offer. Its chairman had already announced that the party's funds were virtually exhausted. It had failed to secure the leadership of Sir Stafford Cripps, who is now rejoining the Labour Party. It had won its few seats at by-elections by catching the disgruntled voter who had no other means of expressing dissatisfaction with the domestic policy of the Coalition. But now that the Labour Party had decided to withdraw from the Coalition before the election and fight independently, it had probably shot its political bolt. Its value to the Labour machine was therefore only a nuisance value, but Sir Richard Acland had already declared, being a good Christian Socialist, that he would rather stand down in the constituencies than split the Left vote. If there was any doubt about the issue, Mr. Loverseed, M.P., decided it. This Common Wealth Member of Parliament chose the graceful way of committing political suicide by joining the local branch of the Labour Party. With that retreat the leader's push for a party affiliation lost its force. The issue was dead.

The United Front of the Left parties is a fine political ideal, but this unhappy manoeuvre of Common Wealth only serves to remind the Right that the Left is fundamentally split. Affiliation, in a legalistic sense, is the determination of the paternity of an illegitimate child. Whose bastard exactly was Common Wealth ? Certainly it was never born of Trade Unionist labour. Trade Unionism collaborated with capitalism : Common Wealth would destroy it. If Common Wealth was really sensitive about its origin, it should have sought affiliation with the Communist Party. But the Communists were not particularly interested. In Russia questions of marriage and paternity are now very strictly regarded.

It was quite obvious to any wide-eyed student of politics that Common Wealth and official Labour were pulling in opposite directions. Common Wealth regarded the capitalist system as fundamentally wicked and sought to replace it : Labour, eschewing fundamental theory, wants to improve it. Common Wealth planned an entirely new economic system, with common ownership of the means of production and with social production for the common good instead of private profit. Labour confines common ownership to coal and power, transport and steel, and proposes, outside these nationalised industries, a sort of partnership between State and private capital through the medium of industrial boards composed of representatives of the Trade Unions and the Employers' Federation. In other words, while Common Wealth was pushing towards a new communism, Labour is falling back into State-Capitalism. The two systems are quite irreconcilable. Affiliation was impossible.

There were other points of dispute between Common Wealth and Labour, notably on questions of compensation for nationalised property, but even when Sir Richard Acland tried to play party politics with Labour and admit the "small man" to a place in his new economic order, he could not disguise his hatred of the anti-social contamination of the profit motive and his longing for a complete socialist revolution on almost Marxian lines. But this was anathema to our Labour leaders. Being more practical politicians than he, they realised that such a social revolution could not be realised without a genuine proletarian mass movement which in the last extremity is prepared to use force—an extremity which would frighten them to death.

Let us face up to this affiliation "order." Common Wealth had no origin except the religious and political mists of Sir Richard Acland's mind. Whatever this Liberal-born baronet is, he is not a proletarian. He cannot talk like one or think like one. He seems to me just a typical product of the non-commercial upper class who has picked up nothing from his education except a social conscience and a few dangerous ideas from revolutionary books. He preached a socialist revolution because he fondly believed that the ruling class is a gang of anti-social capitalists and greedy shareholders grinding profits and dividends out of an exploited working class. But he deluded himself and his followers because there is no such ruling class to-day. The wicked entrepreneurs and capitalists of Sir Richard's imagination no longer control modern trade and industry. There is a division of power in the political and business world between the employer associations and the trade unions. These are the new rulers of Britain, using the Conservative and Labour parties as the political instruments of their power. Sir Richard is merely drawing a red herring across the political path when he asks for a revolutionary socialist vote to dethrone a ruling class and upset an economic system which exists only in his fevered imagination.

My humble advice to the misguided followers of this muddled baronet is to forget Common Wealth read some up-to-date books on the trend of British politics (Bernard Shaw's *Political What's What* for example) and then, keeping their eyes wide open, join the Labour Party. They might help to resist the awful trend of Labour leaders towards State-capitalism and the Corporate State.

NICHOLAS DAVENPORT

THE BRITISH IN BELGIUM

SIR,—I have received a letter from a friend in the Army, somewhere in Belgium. He says :

"... People in the streets look very pale and worn. At present they are worse off for food than ever—not far from starving. Political strife in the country, standstill of industry and mines, no food or fuel in the towns, no help from the Allies, the situation is terrible just now. Government is weak, the Communists still around from the resistance time. To-morrow is the critical day : they have to hand in their weapons. Civil war is in the air. They might call on us to keep order. Pitiable. I had a number of invitations to private houses lately. They have terrific respect here for the Englishman. The well-offs are looking to England to protect the

DECEMBER 11

Mary Agnes
Hamilton

REMEMBERING
MY GOOD FRIENDS

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country from Communism! They believe England is averse to a Communistic Continent. The Government, rather. And they are not so far off from the truth. But the Reds may indeed have their chance now—if it were not for us, Churchill's boys. We are the only organised force in the country at present, which is against them. The industrialists are trembling in their boots here—it is amusing to watch. However, they can sleep soundly, the British Army guarantees their privileges. Though I have an idea that most of the well-offs here are compromised as collaborators! That is the fact, at least in this place. But they are not in prison for that—some invisible influence shields them. It is the poorer collaborators who are being shot. What is really of interest to me is to see at first hand that the *New Statesman and Nation* people are right when saying that the capitalists would make their deal with the devil *in persona*. They managed to survive the German era to become the darlings of the Anglo-Saxons once again. Everything at the expense of their fellow-citizens. This class has become a menace in our time—I am getting surer and surer of it. I can't tell, don't know any yet. (In my search for a warm room I end up in the homes of the well-off, who got the money to buy fuel at the black market, where everything is obtainable! The black marketeers here are the peasants. The poorer classes curse the swines!) But starved, ignorant and fanatical as they may be, they'd probably erect a reign of terror to be squashed by anti-terror in the end from a country the majority of whose population is not for their ideas. It is conceivable that we may get the order to shoot on Belgian civilians these next days—a fantastic and frightful possibility. I hope it will not come off."

SOLDIER

FEAR OF COMMUNISM

SIR,—Although Professor Laski is very dubious about Communists there seems to be no dubiety about the fact that our ruling Conservative elements regard Communists as the chief menace to their way of life. Your contributor, Miss Vera Lindsay, tells us of a British official asking an organiser of the F.F.I., "what is the strength of the Communist danger?" (Those who died so freely to make our invasion successful are now a "danger.") Again, your leading article describes the use of Anglo-American troops to defend the Pierlot Government in Belgium against the Communists and the people. I can say that in the Army, as everywhere else, there is the same preoccupation with the Bolshevik "danger."

Now one hears much of the 20 years' Pact with Bolshevik Russia. This provides varying comfort to all intelligent people—for such people realise that the *sine qua non* of future peace in Europe is friendship and co-operation between Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. But is it really possible to believe that such friendship and co-operation will be realised by any other means than a radical change of Government in England, replacing the Bolshevik hunters by a truly Radical and Left Government?

As for the "German problem," the more diehard Conservative a person is, the more certain is he that *all* Germans are Nazis and that we shall find no remnants at all among the German people of the Left and anti-Nazi elements. Is this not significant? The fact is that these people don't want to find the "Communist danger" in Germany. They like to believe that it does not and will not exist. They approved of Hitler and supported him in the Chamberlain period precisely because he was scotching the Bolshevik menace.

Is it not absolutely plain that there will be no peace in Europe, no close friendship between our country and the great Power at the other end of Europe, without a great spring-cleaning in this country at the next election?

PRIVATE, R.A.O.C.

BUILDING ON SANDYS

SIR,—Our experience in Bristol vividly illustrates the difficulty confronting local authorities in securing sites for prefabricated temporary houses, which is referred to by the author of the article under the above heading.

The Bristol Housing Committee applied some months ago for 3,000 of the Ministries of Health and Works bungalows. A fortnight back it was announced that 2,000 had been allocated to Bristol, and that the first 400 would be delivered in December or January.

With this announcement came another, which staggered and infuriated public opinion throughout the city, to the effect that the Housing Committee, being at its wits' end to find suitable sites for the temporary houses, had secured the approval of the Public Works Committee to the erection of the first 400 *in the public parks.*

The announcement has called forth such a storm of protest in the local press that the project is likely to be dropped, but it provides an ominous portent of the tremendous gap which is likely to separate theory and practice in our efforts at reconstruction unless immediate steps are taken to revolutionise the powers of local authorities and their financial position.

Could anything be more fantastic than that at the very moment when the Planning and Reconstruction Committee is encouraging us all to think in terms of "green belts" and parkways stretching from the heart of the city to the open country, two other corporation committees should be collaborating in a scheme of urban "ribbon development," to enclose what little strips of parkway we already possess with a ring of prefabricated bungalows?

3 Oakland Road,
Bristol 6.

R. ST. JOHN READE

TEACHERS' SALARIES

SIR,—I cannot forbear to comment on your editorial note in the correspondence columns of the current issue.

"Surely" (you say) "the premium to graduates can be better replaced by a premium based on length of training." Certainly, sir, but the Burnham Committee do not propose to do this. All they offer for length of training will do no more than equate the starting salary of the graduate with that already reached by the non-graduate who, by reason of the brevity of his training, was able to start teaching two or three years earlier.

You mention "differential scales for privileged classes of teachers." This is no question of privilege; it is a matter of qualification. Whatever may be the reason for this unwillingness to offer adequate reward for the appropriate qualifications, there can be no doubt about its effect. The graduate will turn to teaching as a last resort.

Because conditions of service were unspeakably bad before, this is surely no reason for passively accepting proposals which are not satisfactory now.

H. W. BLOXHAM.

SIR,—It is rarely that I disagree with the *New Statesman and Nation*, but I cannot accept the sentiments expressed in it on the question of teachers' salaries.

There is surely no assumption or even desire that teachers of older children should be paid more than teachers of younger children. The assumption is that the graduate teacher should be paid more than the non-graduate, irrespective of the kind of school in which he teaches. Certainly let us have parity of conditions in all schools. Let there be graduates in Junior and in Modern schools as well as in the Grammar schools if the supply is sufficient. But I fear, with the proposed remuneration for a degree, there will not even be sufficient graduates to take the advanced work in the Grammar schools. The standard of these therefore is likely to drop and will not be as high, even, as that in the Secondary schools of to-day. The gap between the State schools and the independent schools will be widened.

You say that the premium to graduates can be better replaced by a premium based on length of training. What of the teacher who attempts to im-

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KEGAN PAUL

prove his qualifications by spending all his leisure for some years in order to obtain his degree externally or as an evening student? Is his degree of no value? Are his labours in vain? And is there any purpose in extending the present courses at Training Colleges until there is some guarantee that a higher academic or cultural standard will be reached?

I am not concerned with maintaining "privileged classes" of teachers, but I am very much concerned with raising the status of the teaching profession to that of other professions. This will not be done until those occupied in the higher branches of the profession are paid salaries comparable with the emoluments received by their fellow students who have entered other professions.

I am even more concerned with the effect the dearth of graduates (which will almost certainly result if the Burnham proposals are accepted) will have upon the standard of education attained in the Grammar schools and the consequent difficulty its pupils will have to compete with those of the so-called public schools. Ida M. Crow.

[Reference is made in our Comments to these and similar letters received on this subject.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

DISMAL, DILAPIDATED AND DIRTY

Sir,—With regard to the suggestion that has been made in your columns that the Ministry of Education should make grants for the establishment of news rooms and adult education centres, I think it would be very wasteful and generally undesirable if grants were made to a miscellaneous collection of voluntary bodies. It would obviously be grossly unfair to make grants to one or two only.

Grants ought to be paid to the Education Authorities and the local Municipal Authorities and County Councils. These bodies should be expected to provide not only news rooms and rooms in which adult education classes can meet, but also rooms in which the branches of trade unions and other voluntary bodies can hold their meetings. One of the severe handicaps from which the Trade Union and Labour Movement suffers is the inadequate number of meeting rooms, plus the fact that most of them are dismal and sometimes dilapidated and dirty and have furnishings that belong to the pre-picture house age—the hard bench age.

One of the great problems facing the Trade Union and Labour Movement is to get even a small percentage of its members to turn out to meetings. The kind of halls in which they have to meet is one of the main factors responsible for the poor attendances.

To provide the desirable accommodation and comfortable furnishings is the duty of the municipal and similar authorities, and pressure should be brought upon these bodies to carry out that duty. Democracy cannot work unless it has rooms in which to meet. J. P. M. Millar

General Secretary,
National Council of Labour Colleges.

PASTOR NIEMOELLER

Sir,—May I be allowed to answer Pastor Hildebrandt in lieu of Mr. A. J. P. Taylor? Pastor Hildebrandt asks why Mr. A. J. P. Taylor referred to Pastor Niemoeller as "a war-monger both in the last war and the present one." My reasons for offering myself as a substitute for Mr. Taylor are that I am at the moment publishing a book *From Luther to Niemoeller*, in which, after a decade of research, I try to trace the evil influence Lutheranism had on the destiny of Europe.

As far as Niemoeller is concerned, I cannot obviously summarise 150 pages in a short letter, but the following facts—all taken from publications available in England—will be difficult to refute.

Niemoeller is the prototype of a Prussian officer. "The national idea was almost foremost in his upbringing, and by nature he had leanings towards the Right. Love of his profession as an officer was a matter of course to him, and he was in his element in the war." (*From U-Boat to Pulpit*, London, 1936, page 9). When he was a U-Boat captain during the last war, he had no hesitation to give orders to fire on shipwrecked sailors. "All we can do is to put up our periscope here and there, to prevent the destroyer from picking up too many survivors" (ibid., page 56).

He hated the German Republic and democracy. Even his greatest supporter, the Bishop of Chichester, has to state "He belonged with all his heart to the enemies of the Weimar Republic, and it was only by chance that he, unlike his brother, did not become a member of that party. Their programme for a national revival was fundamentally his own, with its vehement denial of all that was meant by individualism, parliamentarism, pacifism, Marxism and Judaism." (*Niemoeller and His Creed*, London, 1939, page 32.)

"Niemoeller welcomed January 30th, 1933, from the bottom of his heart as the fulfilment of cherished hopes" (ibid., page 33).

Thousands and ten-thousands of Jews, Communists, Socialists, pacifists were murdered and put into concentration camps by Hitler. Niemoeller, the Christian, thanked the Führer from his pulpit. "We again feel ourselves created beings. Profession and social standing, race and nationality are to-day again being regarded by us as important facts." (*First Commandment*, by Martin Niemoeller, London, 1937, pages 58/9). He—long after Hitler has come to power—tells his congregation of the "divine call in Hitler's spiritual revolution which is beginning to take place throughout the whole of our nation" (ibid.).

He quarrels with Hitler, not on account of any fundamental difference with his foreign politics, his anti-Semitism, his atrocities—but on account of a purely internal dispute regarding Church administration. Niemoeller told Hitler "We are not driven by care for our Church, but much more by care for the Third Reich." (*Niemoeller and His Creed*, page 36.)

Niemoeller is sent to a concentration camp. Whatever our human sympathies with anybody, friend or foe, who has to undergo Hitler's atrocities, to deny the fact that Niemoeller is a violent Nazi before he is a Christian would be dangerous hypocrisy.

Stowe School, Peter F. Wiener
Buckingham.

PERSIA—A DENIAL

Sir,—In the report which appeared in your issue of the 18th instant under the title of "Persian Silence," it was mentioned ". . . there has been no denial of the allegation that M. Saed, before deciding that no oil concessions could be granted to anybody until after the war, had virtually concluded negotiations with American interests who wanted to drill in North Persia." I write to state that this allegation does not correspond with fact. No negotiations have been concluded or "virtually concluded" by the Iranian Government with American interests to drill in any part of Persia. In any case, the proposals submitted by American interests early this year, and which were rejected by the Iranian Government, were for an oil concession only in the Persian Gulf and the Iranian coasts of the Arabian Sea, and had no connection with Northern Iran. A. H. Hamzavi,
Press Attaché

Embassy of Iran,
26 Princes Gate,
London, S.W.7.

PAKISTAN

Sir,—A very brief reply is needed to the letter of Mr. S. A. Shah and his friends in your issue of November 18. No one pretends that all Indian Muslims support the idea of Pakistan. Those who oppose it are fully entitled to have and to express their own views. It is, however, probable that a plebiscite of Muslims in Bengal and the north-western provinces of India would show a substantial Pakistan majority. At any rate a plebiscite is the only way in which the facts can be ascertained; and the argument for a purely Muslim plebiscite is unaffected.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

"Did you ever eat my grandmother's curry?" said Flurry to me, later, as we watched Bernard Shute trying to back his motor into the coach house.

I said I had not.

"Well, you'd take a splint off a horse with it," said Mrs. Knox's grandson.

The Aussolas woods were full of birds that day. Birds bursting out of holly bushes like corks out of soda-water bottles. . . .

Yes, there is no doubt about it: the *Ex- riences of an Irish R.M.** are your grandmother's urry. They are a light literature which takes e skin off your tongue, the breath out of your ngs and—to quote a favourite phrase of the uthors—puts your eyes on sticks. And then, ven those sentences I have quoted have a horse in em. There is a horse in every page of this book, alicious and heroic creatures of deep character hich seem to be out on a perpetual hunt. It indeed hard to know which are the people and hich are the horses. Perhaps they are all orses. Flurry Knox would willingly have ecome one. So would his grandmother. Most of e Somerville and Ross women, with their rain- ercened complexions, their long heads and box- ke bodies, their sprained ankles and strained oulders and their frightful high spirits, are nimaginable without their whites and their ays. Their pace is spanking, their talk flies out ke froth. It was not a freak of satire that in e beginning of Anglo-Irish literature, Swift ew the Houyhnhnms as the master race; he as simply recording the national religion.

With a malice and madness that match the omerville and Ross characters the Irish climate ts as a mirror to their antics. The frost crisp on the fallen leaves in the bare woods, e woodcock rise out of the trees or the snipe p away over the frozen bogs into a sky of Nea- olitan enamel; but within an hour rain is outing off the hat brims of the sportsmen and ays of mugginess or downpour jail the mind nd drive it to thoughts of the whiskey bottle, e long meditated intrigues of tribal life, the eacheries and despondencies of the lonely olonial wits. A world that was on the verge becoming Turgenev's turns into a jumble of urtees, Tom Moore and *The Fall of the House of sher;* and half the farce lies not in the horse- lay, but in the ingredients themselves. We egin to laugh before we start reading and that apt to mean that we stop laughing before the nd, and wonder why the authors dare not be uiet for a moment. What would happen if they ere quiet? What did the Major do when he as not trying to keep pace with Flurry Knox's are or (far more complex) follow Flurry's ind? There were mornings, we are told, when spent the time in the gentlemanly task of riting letters. What was he writing? Or hat was old Mrs. Knox thinking as she sat ith her stockinged feet in the fireplace, oblivious the good feed for poultry which always lay nder the Louis Quinze chairs on her drawing- oom floor at Aussolas, and lulled by the pompous oing of the doves which flew into the room and erched on the picture frames of the smoke- ippered portraits of her ancestors? Unless ere is an answer to these questions there is rce in the criticism of Somerville and Ross at used to be made in the sour, wan yellow awn of the Irish revival, when it was a crime r anyone to laugh in Ireland unless they ughed for the right party; the criticism that ese ladies were simply purveying the stage ishman to English magazines and winding up e old parish hurdy-gurdy of Irish farce.

And, of course, they were. The tradition of ish farce is permanent. The stage Irishman permanent. They are as permanent as the ish narrative gift and the use of words as an toxicant. The puritanism of Maynooth and errion Square cannot put its gooseflesh on e warm native fancy. But there is more than one Somerville and Ross. An early novel, written before the *R.M.* made them popular, does attempt to say what the Anglo-Irish were like between one View Hallo or one petty sessions and the next. That book is *The Real Charlotte.* I don't want to be a spoil sport, especially now the *R.M.* has been canonised by Everyman; and I write as a foreigner, but *The Real Charlotte* did something which had not, up to the '90s, been done in Irish literature. It portrayed the Anglo-Irish with the awful, protracted mercy of the artist. It placed them as no novelist had thought of placing them before; as surely, for example, as Mrs. Gaskell knew how to place her world in *Wives and Daughters.* I do not mean that *The Real Charlotte* is as sound or as accomplished a novel as Mrs. Gaskell's. It was a first novel, awkwardly built and, like so many Anglo-Irish writers, the authors never got rid of an amateur, almost a juvenile streak; but *The Real Charlotte* was a beginning of great promise. One went to Ireland looking for the characters of the Irish R.M.; one found oneself, thirty years after it was written, surrounded by the disquieting people of this one serious novel.

The scene is Galway and the long loch beyond it. There is the big estate on the lake. There is the agent's modest place near by. There are one or two absurd houses. And then, back in Dublin or the worst end of Bray there is the genteel squalor of Francie Fitzpatrick's life. In England Francie would be a lower middle-class beauty on the make; in the Ireland of the '90s she is a beautiful hoyden, a tomboy and a flirt, coarse-grained yet childishly unaffected. If she ceases to be prim, she will be a mess; a noise without innocence. She goes to Galway to hook a husband, preferably a mindless young officer who will mend her family fortunes. Too ingenuous to be called an adventuress, too beguiling to be thought entirely vulgar in her man hunt or her manners, Francie will never find her place.

In England, the class system would provide repose for Francie's soul; in Ireland the tribe system, with its withering snobberies, punishes her at every point of her social climb. She is doomed to be second-rate, to attract second-rate behaviour. And though *The Real Charlotte* is a novel about jealousy and the never-ceasing intrigue and treachery of Irish life, its main stuff is this snobbery. Not a plain excluding snobbery that tells you where you can go and where you can't; but a snobbery that is in the blood. Not a snobbery versed in distinguished ancestors only, but a snobbery bedevilling the character with the pretensions of second cousins and the mildewed memories of better times. It is a snobbery that has become the meaning of life. It is everything: good sense, idealism, hatred, tenderness, religion—even pity. We must allow something for the fact that this book is written in the '90s; and when the Dysarts wince because Francie keeps her gloves on at tea, we are charmed by the comedy of the manners of a period. Anglo-Irish snobbery was pretty genial about such quaintnesses. But underneath this are the inturned passions of a small, defensive and decaying colonial society; Francie is a social casualty in the everlasting skirmish with the other Ireland. Only by exaggerating their exclusiveness and creating low comedy around them, can the Ascendants keep their ascendancy.

Of course, we may read in the Dysarts a devotion to manners, sensibility and excellence; but the devotion is carried so far that it becomes negative. It has become a mania, like Lady Dysart's acrostics. And the mania spreads downwards. So Lambert, the land agent, wishes to impress as much as the Dysarts and his desire turns to self-destructive hatred of them. He ends by trying to cheat them. Francie's cousin Charlotte, who is half peasant and whose clumsy mind can yet devise labyrinthine schemes, bids too high on Francie's behalf, hopes to capture a Dysart for her, and is betrayed by the girl. In a curious passage, the young Christopher Dysart feels a mingled envy and pity for Francie's vital but ill-judged insouciance; and Francie, to whom he is incomprehensible because he is so far above her, rubs her low breeding into him in order to cause him pain and, by causing pain, to bring him nearer to her understanding. Again, Lambert enjoys making a fool of Charlotte by arousing her feelings in order to exploit her purse and cut a figure. Snobbery creates victims to pity and all these characters discover the strange pleasure of forgiving the people they have injured. If they all only knew it, the logical end of their mania was the sensitive, tedious, ineffectuality of Christopher Dysart. In him there is a masterly portrait of the lifeless, hopelessly neutral, decent young aristocrat of the period.

Cousin Charlotte has been compared to Cousine Bette and, allowing for the change to the raw Irish scene, there is something in the comparison. The money motives, the class structure, are there. To these elements one must add a peculiar psychological quickness to catch the perversity of human feeling and the cross-ruffing of Fate. In her jealous plottings Charlotte cannot bear not to give herself away. Feeling presents itself as intrigue. Francie is not the only flirt; they are all flirting with every dream and issue. They cross one another and double cross themselves. Pity becomes hatred, hatred turns into tenderness, tenderness into cruelty. We watch with fascination while the dull irritable land agent with his debts, his horses and his ailing wife, ingeniously plots his own downfall.

All this must be visualised against an animated scene which is broken by some of the R.M. comedy that was to come. The absurd pleasure launch on the lake, tooting away at the least convenient moment, and its inane comment on the people, is a delightful invention. The awful English officer and Don Juan is an excellent cad. The middle-class carpet dance is a fearful romp. A hundred small touches keep this small world in a continual ripple and change of colour. On the other hand, the chorus from peasant life is boring. Fifty years of politics lie between us and these skirling *commères*, with their high pitched domestic life and the loquacity of distressed Elizabethans. But the narrative writing has the Irish visual gift, so bold in its metaphors, so athletic in its speed, as if tongue and eye were racing against each other. There is the native animism:

> Tall brick houses, browbeating each other in gloomy respectability across the street.

The shrewd is punched home by the baroque:

> She was losing hold of herself; her gestures were of the sort that she usually reserved for her inferiors and the corners of her mouth bubbles like a snail.

And then, though there is hardly a breath of Irish politics in the story, they are there by implication. For the characters are exclusively the Irish Protestants and their isolation gives a strength to the strokes in which they are drawn.

The faults of *The Real Charlotte* are obvious. The national malady of not "letting on" what you are up to, enables the novelist to catch the changeableness of human character; but towards the end the elusive becomes the frantic. It is unforgivable that Francie is killed out riding; especially as her death, one is pretty sure, is due to the profound snobbery of the authors. There was no way of making a lady of her, so she had to be killed. But after one has removed the old-fashioned trappings, the irony, the insight and portraiture of this novel, show that Anglo-Irish society might have got its Mrs. Gaskell, if the amateur tastes of the discursive colonial had not breezily ridden the chance off the page.

V. S. PRITCHETT

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NEW NOVELS

A Walk in the Sun. By HARRY BROWN. *Secker and Warburg.* 6*s.*

Fair Stood the Wind for France. By H. E. BATES. *Michael Joseph.* 9*s.* 6*d.*

Men Die Alone. By MICHAEL LEIGH. *Eyre and Spottiswoode.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Like aspects of the war itself, novels about the war can produce in the reader a great variety of feelings. Whether the material is taken from the battle-fronts, as in these three novels, or from the dreary corruption of the wartime Civil Service, as in Mr. Balchin's *The Small Back Room*, the treatment has only to be moderately competent to induce all the feelings one has about mere news: rage, impotence, pity, wretchedness and, above all perhaps, a guiltiness at being well, happy or even alive, which one tries one's hardest to evade. But if this is all we get from a novel, certain things are lacking which ought to be there: among them the preservative qualities of art without which no novel, play or poem will survive much longer than news survives. *Journey's End*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Death of a Hero*, *All Our Yesterdays* were intensely sincere works, factually substantial and written by writers who even, in a dilettante way, had an interest in the technique of their arts. To the young reader of to-day they will scarcely be more than names. Two of the three novels listed above will, one predicts, suffer the same fate, though they are written with a passionate belief in their subject-matter and with an obvious care for truth. But though they do not lack care, and though they have their moving moments and exciting final runs towards their climaxes, they induce only the emotions that news induces. At their high spots they make one's heart beat faster; but they will not do so twice.

In *A Walk in the Sun*, Mr. Harry Brown makes the heart hop in a different way—as, for example, a change from the major to the minor may in a piece of music. He seems deliberately to avoid the ready-made advantages of his material. There are deaths and wounds in his book, but they do not awake horror, nor are they meant to. His plot, or the cadence of his story, is indicated as soon as it reasonably can be. We soon know where the story is going and where it will end; the author therefore sets himself the problem of interesting us primarily in the way he gets through with it. There is no sentimentality, no propaganda, no melodrama; one does not feel ashamed because the characters are on a blistering road in an Italian beach-head and oneself is in an armchair. Mr. Brown's kind of realism is a curious one. It comes from the air of calm, unquestioned and unquestionable inevitability which hangs about the book; he makes us not so much feel that we are there on the spot as acknowledge how we should be bound to feel if we were: a less spectacular, but a harder, task than that of the war-thriller. He knows an extraordinary amount—all, one is tempted to say—about the possible norms of feeling in continually abnormal circumstances.

His book is simply the story of a platoon's first exploit in Italy. It begins in the landing-barge in the dark and it carries the platoon six miles inland to the capture of its scheduled objective, a small farmhouse. Its first remarkable achievement is to make us feel, quite early in the book, the haphazard nature of death; we become as much reconciled to this as are the characters themselves—they have become used to it in a year's fighting through North Africa and Sicily. We feel not only the chancy incidence of death, but the quick readjustment of balance and attitude that must happen in a small group of soldiers every time someone is subtracted from them. The leading officer is killed in the first few pages, and one knows that a potential plot has been thereby reshuffled. Twenty pages later the leading sergeant is wounded and another reshuffle takes place. The leading sergeant after him eventually collapses into hysteria; the potential future changes again. One is even conscious—as the men would be—that if their original commanding officer had not been knocked out in Sicily before the book begins, the situation would have been still otherwise. There is a continual sense of modulation in the book; I imagine this to be wholly true to life, and Mr. Brown is wholly convincing in his representation of it.

In this book one has more than the jolted excitement one has at a film; one has the excitement given by the progress and fulfilment of a work of art. Mr. Brown has deliberately chosen a side alley of the Anzio story: it best satisfies his requirements. He writes his tale in understatements, yet with the aplomb, the *savoir-faire*, the sense of proportion of a classical sonata. The whole book is beautifully composed; it is witty—almost the whole of the dialogue is banter and wise-cracks; it has none of the sentimental toughness of much American writing; its style is nearer to Thurber than to Hemingway, a style chastened and subdued, capable not only of describing action but of conveying knowledge.

War, without virtue in itself, breeds virtue. I breeds patience in the impatient and heroism i the cowardly, but mostly it breeds patience. Fo war is a dull business, the dullest business o earth. War is a period of waiting. Mainly it i a period of waiting for war to be over, but eac day it is crammed with the little hesitations o men uncertain of themselves and awed by th ghastly responsibilities, responsibilities of life an death, the responsibilities of gods, that have bee thrust into their hands. The soldier waits fo food, for clothing, for a letter, for a battle t begin. And often the food never is served, th clothing is never issued, the letter never arrive and the battle never begins. The soldier learn to wait meekly, hoping that something will happe And, when the period of waiting is at an end, th something that does happen isn't what he expected So in the end he learns to wait and expect nothing That is patience. That is God's one great gift t the soldier.

Though they are efficiently executed, *Fair Stoo the Wind for France* and *Men Die Alone* ar novels on a much lower level. Mr. Bates's nov is the story of an airman forced to land in Occupied France while flying back from an attack o Italy. He is looked after by a French famil and he and the daughter of the house fall in lov The second half of the book records their escap to Spain. The background of the war and th ever-present, overpowering threat of danger see to me to take the place of characterisation in suc novels as this. The man and the girl think a goo deal, and we overhear their thoughts, but ther is no conflict or development, only the efforts t cope with external situations. It is only whe these are particularly unusual that the book come to life, and that it ceases to matter that th characters are conventional and doll-like and tha the book is flat and dead in tone. The first hal of the book is rather slow going, but in its late pages it becomes very thrilling: the scenes in th inn at the Vichy border, in the hideously demoralised "bad town" in the south, and in Marseilles, are told with excellent craftsmanship.

Men Die Alone is about an isolated few soldier on the South Russian front who, together with nurse, become detached from the main forces an are left to creep and fight their way throug country occupied by the Germans back to the own lines. The incidents are well chosen an well timed, and, since the author is not a Russian the book is a *tour-de-force* of imaginative projection. The discovery of the butchered an deserted village in the snow is terrible and impressive, and the turning-point of the story— which is identified with the turning-point of th

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Russian war—is extremely moving. One lives for a time through that great moment when to so many similarly isolated groups the knowledge came that the Germans had broken, Stalingrad had been relieved and the recapture of the great names had begun. The story is rather naively told, the characters are operatically simplified—Djerjinsky is probably already at work with some such libretto as this before him—but the book is worth reading, and it jogs the worn-out memory at an appropriate spot.

HENRY REED

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

The Royal Society. By SIR HENRY LYONS. *Cambridge University Press.* 25s.

The events of the war have revealed in the most striking way the dependence of this country on its scientific development. She was saved by radio-location in 1940, and she will need equally brilliant scientific arms in the future to defeat various kinds of new and long-range weapons. In civilian life she will need science to make the most of her relatively small island population and natural resources and for close-knit collaboration with her friends.

These things cannot be achieved without adequate scientific institutions which in turn depend for healthy functioning on a scientific climate of the highest quality, variety and vigour.

In this country the Royal Society is the custodian of scientific quality. Will this be its chief role in the future, or will it perform other main functions? Owing to the new social importance of science, this is a matter of the widest general interest.

The Society was founded in the middle of the seventeenth century, after the expansion following the discovery of America and the growth of British maritime power, whose implications in the sphere of the intellect were interpreted by Francis Bacon. The founders of the Society owed their intellectual inspiration chiefly to him. Echoes of his phrases occur in the Charter: their "studies are to be applied to further promoting by the authority of experiments, the sciences of natural things and of useful arts, to the Glory of God the Creator, and the advantage of the human race."

The founders aimed at what is now called the planned development of science, for the benefit of mankind. They were in the closest touch with Court and Government, and many of their active members were statesmen. After splendid beginnings there was a decline in effort and inspiration. The trend towards converting the Society into a specialist body began as early as 1674, with Newton's proposal of "the ejection of all useless fellows." The movement strengthened at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Like Newton, its leaders were professional men. They included the banker Lubbock, the lawyer Grove and the professionals of humble origin: Davy and Faraday. The [illegible]formers limited yearly elections to fifteen scientists of high research achievement. By the end of the nineteenth century the nature of the membership had changed profoundly. The numbers had fallen to about 450, its business was almost entirely in the hands of research scientists, and statesmen had honorific membership only. Sir Henry Lyons evidently assumed that this was a desirable development. The degree of separation of science from affairs is illustrated by the late Lord Rayleigh's atttitude to the fiftieth anniversary of Perkin's discovery of synthetic dyes. "It is true that the coal-tar industry is a matter mainly of applied science and technology, which might be considered in itself not to touch very closely the sphere of action of the Royal Society. . . ." A view contrary to the Society's own charter! Combined with this view was the belief that scientists who took part in business and politics were tainted, and, if young, their chances of election to the fellowship would be prejudiced. To-day the nature of the Society remains much the same, though the war of 1914, the crisis of 1931 and the present war have considerably changed opinion on the propriety of fellows taking part in politics and attending to the relations between science and affairs. It has about the same number of members, little administrative staff and, according to modern standards, little income. But scientific activities in the country have grown enormously.

What relation is the Society to have to these new and immense scientific activities, many of them conducted and financed by Government?

Is it to have a directive function? Is this possible without administrative and financial responsibility? Further, can such directive power be exerted without practice in politics and social affairs? Hasn't the policy of the last hundred years unfitted the Society for the role of statesmanship?

If so, shouldn't the Society reform itself again on the original Baconian lines, rather like the Soviet Academy of Sciences, with definite official status, resources and powers? Many would not welcome such a development, and would prefer the Society to remain a private body of specialists with relatively no machinery.

But if the Society remains of this type and also acquires directive powers, serious dangers arise. On the one hand, there will be the Society with supreme scientific authority but no administrative responsibility, while on the other there will be Government and other scientific departments with administrative responsibility but no scientific authority. These huge administrative machines will grow without ideas and possibilities of their own, repulsive to men of intelligence, and finally without brain or soul. Signs of these phenomena have already occurred.

How is the quality of the new organisations to be sustained? If the Royal Society is not to become an official directive organisation, with appropriate resources, this can be solved only by fostering scientific initiative and authority in the new organisations.

Sir Henry Lyons's researches show that the Society has had similar problems in the past. It feared the formation of new scientific societies at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Sir Joseph Banks, the president, took the view that "so long as the new bodies were prepared to be definitely subordinate to the Royal Society and to be in effect controlled and administered by its Council, he had no objection to them, but if they demanded an independent existence and complete freedom in the management of their affairs he opposed them." History has shown that Sir Joseph's policy was mistaken.

It seems, then, that if the Royal Society is not to reform its nature on the original Baconian lines, its role will be mainly one of fostering and encouraging, with the sustainment of quality.

Sir Henry Lyons's posthumous book is invaluable because it provides essential data for the formation of opinion on the future role of the Royal Society in British scientific affairs.

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and by a desire to put an end to the "colonial system" under which such things are possible. All the facts are there for the picking; and not only in "progressive" writings—the best ammunition for blasting holes in the complacency of colonial administrations comes from Government documents, reports of commissions of inquiry, pronouncements by solemn committees set up by the Colonial Office itself. Mr. Russell's book is, in effect, a summary, one might almost call it a reference book, of all these depressing facts and figures. He describes, with wealth of illustration, the appallingly bad labour conditions and low wage rates common in the Colonies, contrasted with the satisfying profits derived by capitalist enterprises from their colonial undertakings. He examines the miserable level of the social services and the ludicrously low expenditure on education and health per head of the native populations. He sets forth the way the colour bar works in practice—the segregation of the Africans in inadequate land areas; their degradation to the lowest and most ill-paid forms of employment; the humiliations of pass laws, special taxation and other forms of differential treatment. He analyses the weaknesses of the economic system in the Colonies, with their dependence on single export crops commanding the most fluctuating prices, and their lack of an internal market. And he recounts with sympathy the struggles of young Trade Unions and nascent political movements, too often faced with the suspicious attitude of a virtually uncontrolled bureaucracy.

The collection of all these facts, with the emotional response which studying them must breed, is a valuable political service, and Mr. Russell deserves our warm thanks. He has done the task efficiently and clearly taken great pains over it. But this should now be the last book of this type. By now we should all have visited the Chamber of Horrors, our emotions and our sense of responsibility should have been sufficiently stirred, and we should be asking ourselves, "What are we going to do about it?" How, in actual practice, are we going to get higher wage-rates for colonial workers? How, in actual practice, are we going to spread a good education system through the length and breadth of the Empire—education costing what it does, and colonial revenues being what they are? Is it going to be any easier to nationalise the gold mines of Africa than it has been to nationalise the coal mines of Great Britain—and what machinery will be needed to do this? What type of trading organisation is needed to secure decent prices for cocoa and cotton and palm produce? Will the grant of "self-government" automatically ensure that small and weak territories will enjoy better wages and living standards, better prices for their exports, better social services? And what exactly do we mean by "self-government"? This is the type of question which must now be posed and answered if we are to get any farther in dealing with the colonial problem. The facts of the situation are now admitted. What is needed is constructive thought as to how to set the wretched situation right. It has become a matter of devising machinery, a difficult job of social engineering either for us, or, better still, for the colonial people themselves, with or without our aid. It is no longer a matter of shouting slogans.

Here is a problem clamouring for the best of socialist thought. There have been many changes and some progress in colonial policy and practice during the last few years. Mr. Russell's book was completed in 1942 and already in 1944 one can point to passage after passage where time and the rush of events have overtaken him. We do no service by shutting our eyes to the fact that things *are* moving; that it is simply no longer truthful to suggest that all Trade unionists and political leaders in the Colonies are "victimised"; or to deny that useful development schemes are being prepared in Colony after Colony; or to discount the sincere and detailed thought being given to the expansion of education and other social services, and the improvement of marketing and other economic arrangements. But there is no guarantee that things will move the way we, as socialists, want, unless we apply *our* principles to the facts of colonial economics and politics, work out our own detailed policies and force them on public attention.

Mr. Russell has helped to finish a task which was essential in its time. But now, what of the *new* epoch in this branch of political thought? I have one urgent prayer in this regard—that the skins of the thinkers will be black as well as white.

RITA HINDEN

NEW NORTH-WEST PASSAGE

Plowing the Arctic. By G. J. TRANTER. *Hodder and Stoughton.* 12s. 6d.

Mr. Tranter has reconstructed the remarkable story of the first voyage ever made through the North-West Passage from West to East. The journey lasted from June, 1940, till Octobe 1942, and had it not taken place at the mos crucial period of the war, would certainly hav been compared, in the world press, to the majo feats of Arctic exploration in the past. It wa not until 1906 that the N.W. Passage was suc cessfully traversed, from East to West, by Amund sen. The expedition here described was mad by a picked group of Royal Canadian Mounte Police, commanded by Sergeant Henry Larsen in the *St. Roch*, a patrol boat of only eighty tons The distance covered was nearly 10,000 miles necessitating provisions for five years, and th most arduous and dangerous stage was, of course the passage through the ice-clogged islands o the Esquimeaux-inhabited North-West Territories

All stories in which the animating theme i the tenacity, hardihood and courage of the actors over a long period of time are peculiarly difficul to manage. Mr. Tranter may well be forgiven therefore, if Sgt. Larsen, scanning the froze wastes with a steely eye, becomes, after about year, almost vexing in his assiduity and resource The reader, too, may be excused if he come secretly to admire the Sergeant's adroitness le when he is dealing with a fleet of charging ice bergs, for example, than with the horrors o Esquimeaux hospitality. An unborn seal, lightl poached in its mother's blood, is one of the mor recognisable appetisers. For the unsqueamish the revelations about the diet and domesti customs of this kindly, puzzled, dwindling peopl are among the more rewarding parts of the book Reading between the lines, it is clear that th missionaries are producing their customary effec

". . . they came in sight of the village o Arviktootsiak, with about a dozen igloos huddle close to a huge snowhouse that glistened i dazzling white splendour, indicating its newness Larsen's brows met in a puzzled frown, for th enormous building reminded him of the festiv houses that belonged to the old days when village put on a dance and the natives came fro miles around to join in the festivities; but no the missionaries had come there was no need fo a dance house any more." H'm.

Mr. Tranter's detail is often fascinating. Th friable snow-houses, with windows made of pane of fresh-water ice—windows so precious that the owners take them with them, when migrating carefully packed. The dangers of sudde sea-freezing, which will immobilise a ship fo a year. The intricacies of spearing seal throug ice. (Forbidden on Sundays by guess who. *Plowing the Arctic* is the conscientious accou

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BRIAN HOWARD

A TEXTBOOK ON MONEY

oney : Its Present and Future. By G. D. H. COLE. *Cassell.* 15*s.*

Professor Cole's latest work is offered as a xtbook. The first part is concerned with mestic monetary problems; the latter part als with international issues. The intelligent neral reader, to whom the book is addressed, is omised to find the fundamental facts set forth language so clear that he shall be left with no cuse for not understanding them. This turns t to be rather a reckless promise.

Less than ten years ago, monetary theory was e most complicated and the most controversial economic topics; to-day it is a relatively aightforward matter. The change, as everyone ows, is due to the Keynesian revolution. One the principal victims of this revolution was the lume of currency and credit, the quantity of oney. Until then thought to be the chief factor the determination of prices, production and nployment, it now has to be content with a very inor role. The quantity of money in existence, changes in the quantity of money, are not sponsible for our troubles; nor can they cure em. What matters is total spending; money is more than a lubricant. Technical monetary tail, in short, recedes into the background.

This basic truth Professor Cole accepts like eryone else. Throughout the first part of his ok, however, with the exception of one brief apter, it is well-nigh forgotten. Amidst a gorous refutation of some discarded theories, e Say's Law or Major Douglas's A+B theorem, the old views, equally dead, turn up again: pressions are caused by bankers who restrict edit; by speculators who divert credit from oductive uses; by hoarders. Additional ending power, once created, will go on circu- ting indefinitely; it will raise prices even in nditions of unemployment. Higher wages use unemployment. The level of prices adjusts elf to the quantity of money. Bank deposits nsist of two kinds, which are indistinguishable, me belonging to their owners, others created by e banking system. And so on.

However admirable the rest of the exposition, ese echoes of the past are very confusing. Some them are due, perhaps, to the author's desire to be simple and straightforward, to shun technical terms and abstract analysis. In broad outline, and with regard to fundamentals, this is clearly possible. Technical monetary matters, on the other hand, are technical; they are simpler than they used to be, but they are not simple. Nor is it especially urgent that they should be. In all important matters, like Full Employment or Social Security, they play a very minor part; in an exposition of these, the general reader will most likely not wish to be burdened with them. If, on the other hand, he is particularly interested in technical matters he is probably quite willing to endure the special terms, abstractions, etc., of the conventional text book. Why, then, simplify, unsuccessfully, technicalities?

The second part of the book, concerned, in the main, with international monetary reconstruction, is of different character. A critical analysis of our troubles in the past and a discussion of the Keynes and White Plans and the plan for an International Investment Bank are but the material for the author's own recommendations. He warns against the rigidities of the gold standard, and he wishes to leave each country free to determine the external value of its currency without any restrictions. Bulk purchases of necessary imports are recommended; so are bilateral agreements, to be used as instruments of expansion. There is a vigorous plea for capital exports to backward countries designed to raise their standard of living. A postscript on the latest statement on the International Monetary Fund, which appeared after the book had gone to press, notes, with relief, that the new plan, if not a great advance, is at any rate not actively dangerous.

Professor Cole does not write this book primarily as a socialist; it is only now and then that we are offered fragments of a socialist policy. One of these, perhaps, is of special interest: the suggestion of a "Social Dividend." This is to be financed by a turnover tax, and to be distributed to all, not as a reward for effort, but "as their common birth-right in the collective productive capacity of the economic system." This is not, we are assured, as Utopian as it may sound.

A. RADOMYSLER

Politics Made Plain. By T. L. HORABIN. *Penguin. 9d.*

This is a strongly worded and effectively documented resumé of the case against the Tory government of Britain during the last twenty-five years. The story needs re-telling, for war propaganda has enabled people to forget that Conservative power has been maintained by a series of electoral tricks and that war was made inevitable by the deliberate destruction of the League and a policy which regarded Fascism, particularly in Germany, as an ally of the Tory Party in its fight against Socialism. There is a quotation here from Lord D'Abernon, first British Ambassador to Germany after the last war, that explains better than anything else why Germany was rearmed, and another, in which the Belgium Premier explains no less effectively why in view of British policy some small nations decided to accept German hegemony. The facts about the Peace Ballot are here, finally disposing of the myth that it was the pacifism of the Left that prevented the Government standing up to Hitler. In fact, there was an overwhelming national majority for collective security and, if necessary, military sanctions against Germany. Mr. Horabin's book is polemic, written with a view to countering Conservative electoral propaganda. It ends with a plea for unity on the Left. Its weakness is that it does not state how far this unity should extend or how it is to be attained.

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Cluster'd about the Pages of her Book
They hover, anxious at her anxious Look.
Here, in the Semblance of an Eastern *Gnome*,
Stout *Cocoa* begs he might escort her Home,
While phantom Bars of *Chocolate* cry him down
—" A poor Relation, living on the Town ! "—
Next in her worried Gaze, a Shapeless *Elf*,
Dull *Tapioca*, clamours for her Pelfe.
Clarissa quells him with a scornful Eye ;
Whate'er her Need, the *Wretch* she will not Buy.
Now wily *Salmon*, like a silver *Djinn*,
Pleads that the Fair release him from his Tin ;
And here, in Chorus hymning *Housewife's* Heaven
Varieties of *Angels* Fifty Seven.
Desp'rate, she chuses ; takes three Jars of *Jam*,
And at her Verdict—" Let the rest be SPAM ! "—
The *Grocer's* flashing Shears begin to sever
Points from her Book—for ever and for ever.

TERENCE MELICAN

By Butchers baffled, foil'd in search of Hake,
Outgen'rall'd for the final piece of Cake,
The Matron next pursues her private War
By joining Battle in the Groc'ry Store.
WOOLTON devis'd, LLEWELLIN still maintains
A Scheme to vex the harass'd Housewife's brains.
Not Cash alone must pay, but also Points
For fare to supplement the meagre Joints.
Each Cate receives an arbitrary count,
This high, that low, a mutable amount.
Our Matron straight with practis'd eye o'erlooks
The patchwork pages of her Ration Books.
A's, B's, and C's she reckons in a trice,
Consults a list, and gives the order—" Rice ! "
Peas in a packet, Syrup in a tin,
Pig in a poke, so does her tale begin.
Prudent she buys th'aperient Fig and Prune,
Too late for Salmon, and for Dates too soon ;
In fine herself some choc'late Biscuits votes,
Her children Wheat flakes, and her husband—Oats.

LESLIE JOHNSON

Upon the Marble, ordinately nice,
The Dainties tempt, from *Eire* steak to Rice.
These Prizes and her hand the pensive Dame
Reviews with care, and so begins the Game.
Her hand of Ration Books, buff, green and blue ;
The Game (than *Ombre* more exact or *Lu*,
With all that Orders, Regulations, Rules
Can do to baffle Knaves or puzzle Fools)
By chance or skill her num'rous Needs to fit
With what the Shopman, Purse and Points permit.

Raisins she first and liquid sweetness chose ;
Eight Points a pound is this, as many those.
One Trick thus ventur'd, next she captive led
The mighty *Spam* that Presidents hath fed.
With him small Fishes, exquisitely sauc'd,
The second Trick complete and Book exhaust,
Beans, Macaroni, frugal nutriment,
Prunes, precious Biscuits—the last Book is spent.
The two-edg'd Engine snips the Card away,
The Till resounds, *and that is all to-day*.

R. J. P. HEWISON

The nimble gnomes the matron's feet impel,
Belinda shops, and shops surpassing well.
Now to her banquet Beaux and Belles repair,
And Bloomsbury rubs cold shoulders with Mayfair.
Its tiny self Vancouver's salmon preens,
And Britain's oldest ally sends sardines :
There oxen's tongues, there tails of cocks behold,
Spice wed to ham, Lyle's pool of glutinous gold,
While Chypre's fragrance each sweet breast anoints,
And every morsel is a dozen points,
Laved with Scotch waters, Gallic wines, and then
A thousand dainties past Llewellyn's ken.
Sponsors the feat my Lord of Sablemart,
Whose rank and rentroll melt th' official heart,
Flanked by a placeman, ushered by a mayor,
And with expectant ogle toasts the fair.
Belinda smiles serene, nor counts the cost
Of every point and all her virtue lost,
While her sleek husband battens on the spread,
And pats the horns that sprout upon his head.

HORACE B. SAMUEL

With Nymphs attendant and with anxious Air
With Book and Basket see the Belle repair
Where F-rtn-m's windows give upon the Street
Revealing Food as fair to see as eat.
Th' expectant Janus, gloriously arrayed
Flings wide the Portals, and admits the Maid.
Around her Gifts of Earth and Sea and Sky
In crystal Chalices imprisoned lie,
With tender Sweets for nightly Revels fit
Where Food and Drink supply the Want of Wit.
Of these must choice be made ; no longer free
To buy as Purse or Appetite decree
(So W— t-n wills) Clarissa scans the Lines
And now to Treacle, now to Pork inclines.
She hesitates, and weighs with fretful Chat
One Pound of this against a Pound of that.
'Tis done : sleek M-s-n from the Shade appears
Seizes her Book, and opes the glittering Shears.
They close again, the fatal Parchment sever,
And one Month's Points are gone from her for ever !

IMALECH

For lo ! the shelves, with luscious dainties crown'd,
Produce of far Cathay (four points per pound) ;
The Peach, the Apricot, the classic Prune,
(The lodger's nightmare and the housewife's boon) :
Here succulent Tongue, with specious lease-le
  Spam
Hustles for elbow-room with Cape-tinned Jam ;
Twice-cooked confections from the House of C
Recall delights that War has banished far :
Golden the Syrup, purchased once in pints,
Now coyly sheltered by pervasive Heinz.
Colonel, Food-potentate, give us baked beans,
Release the Pilchards, Salmon and Sardines,
Fear the just Gods, and think of Tantalus,
Condemned to starve mid plenty, just like us.
With heavy heart, long she surveyed each prize,
Then flashed the living lightning from her eyes :
Not louder groans are heard on Stygian banks
When pitch-forked spirits throng the shady rank
As fell the points, clipped by the Forfex wide,
And Madam with her basket rushed outside.

W. J. HALLIDAY

RESULT OF SPECIAL COMPETITIO

Report by Raymond Mortimer

Several entrants ask for another such competitio and their wishes are commands. Meanwhile Indi Ceylon, Persia, New Zealand, Australia, East Afric Gibraltar, Tripolitania, M. E. F., C. M. F., S. E. A. C and His Majesty's ships have sent their clerihews abo book titles, some of which reflect local experience One competitor requests that this report be given i several successive issues, in case he misses this one and I regret that paper-rationing makes this impossible I recommend the prizes of a guinea each to go t J. C. B. Date, Maurice Johnson, Philip M. Skelsey and Ian Watt. I append a selection from othe entries and regret that civilian prudery obliges me t omit several relating to *Madame Bovary*.

What a menace is
The " Book of Genesis,"
With its inaccurate terminology
When dealing with biology !

Had Shaw
Written " Bradshaw,"
It
Would be praised for wit.

It's rather mean
To quote from the " Faery Queen "
Just to get the credit
For having read it.

J. C. B. DATE

Such were the sales of the Koran
That Warburg evolved a plan
To create a branch office in Mecca
Under Secker.

THE CZECHOSLOVAK CAUSE
By E. TÁBORSKÝ
An account of the problems of International Law in relation to Czechoslovakia.
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On reading "Tess"
Mae West said "Yes,
That's the part for me."
It did not prove to be.

Mein Kampf
Was used for bampf
By Rudolf Hess
In a moment of distress.
Ian Wate

"Ulysses"
Is really quite a tease.
A basic translation
Would cause quite a sensation.
John and Oliver

We should take our hats off,
To the Brothers Karamazov.
That, I apprehend,
Is the meaning of the bit at the end.

"Kim" is by Kipling
Whose hobby was tippling
In the dreary hubbub
Of a cantonment clubub.
Antony Crowe

Westward Ho
Is a tale of Adventure in the long ago
The modern youth probably thinks
It refers to the place with the well known Links.
R. J. S. Davies

"Let the People Sing"
Has something
Which many novels have not:
A plot.
Sydney Fox

Some would bellow
Even at "Crome Yellow"
An attempt to delouse
The English country house.
Tuatara

To avoid making a howler,
Use Fowler
It's a book, of reference
That deserves much deference.
Oliver

"Almayer's Folly"
Is not very jolly—
There's so much parsian and copra
And much *amour propre.*
Ush

"Sense and Sensibility"
Are shown to be both qualities of matrimonial utility.
But one misses some of Willoughby's abandon
In John Ferrers and poor Colonel Brandon.
O. Coburn

"Three Men in a Boat"
Used to get my goat.
But "Eight Men in a Tent on the Ground"
Is even worse, I've found.
R. C. R. Swallow

Emily didn't much care
For "Jane Eyre,"
While the thought of reading "Wuthering Heights"
Caused Charlotte sleepless nights.
B. Inglis

Lady Chatterley's Lover,
Having read the "Tatler" from cover to cover,
Said: Now fetch
The "Sketch."
C. J. R.

The homely skin of a
Mrs. Miniver
Has much more class on
Greer Garson.
Maevius

The "Letters of Gertrude Bell"
Of the Arab most lucidly tell
With nothing quite so esoteric
As maaleesh, magnoon and catirkerrik.

In the Field Service Pocket Book you will find
Military dodges of every kind
How to fix a bayonet or cross a thicket
But not one word on working your ticket.
A. E. Drake

The headmaster's praise was quite resounding,
When he saw the boy reading "Grace Abounding,"
But he'd probably have expelled him from college
If he'd known that inside was "Encyclopaedia of Sexual Knowledge."

"Totem and Taboo's"
Determinist views
Seem to goad
Dr. Joad.
J. C. Angell

Eric
Was written by a cleric:
Such piety
Offends propriety.
"Cyrano"

Is the "New Statesman" a book?
No!—If you'll look,
You'll find, in the last line chatter,
It's only 2nd class matter!

To a Desert Rat—"The Sheik,"
Is one long shriek.
Moonlit sand dunes—mysterious, sad—
The author's mad!
D. A. Hough

At "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam"
Are you as bored as I am?
You will be after the first year
In Persia.
A. G. Rose

Cheap prints of War and Peace
And further Lend-Lease
Are improving relations
Between nations.

Dons backed on
Acton
He's passé and flat
Since 1066 and ALL that.
Brian Stanton

In "EGO V,"
HE is still alive,
I presume that in EGO 11,
He will knock Hell out of Heaven.
L. Baker

When liable to be shot
And hoping not,
"Why Britain is at War"
Is rather a bore.
C. J. Mears

A copy of "Gone With the Wind"
Was ceremonially burnt in the Sind.
Those concerned were awarded bar
To their '39-'43 Star.

They should put a Nazi flag on
The cover of St. George and the Dragon
To celebrate Lord Elton's part
In the attack on art.

Musso used the ABC of Reading
As a guide to kultural good breeding.
I wonder if they've found
Ezra Pound.

Desmond MacCarthy
Thinks Sarge a bit arty
But, to Edmund Wilson, Finnegan's Wake
Is a piece of cake.
Philip M. Skelsey

"Persuasion"
Was reprinted for the Invasion
Under the aegis
Of the mayor of Lyme Regis.

There's a lot inside
"The Intelligent Woman's Guide."
Though not exactly bad Shaw,
Personally I much prefer Bradshaw.

Competitors who gently
Emulate the muse of Bentley
Should find a place
For "Trent's Last Case."

Bishops and their spouses,
Visiting Trust Houses,
Invariably thank Heaven
For the Public Schools' Year Book of 1927.

"Madame Bovary"
Never sells in Burnham Overy.
The reason, I must admit,
Startled me quite a bit.
Maurice Johnson

Personal

ON'T blame the Bookseller if you cannot get every book advertised in our columns.

RTIST'S wife, London, would welcome stored piano. Good tone, condition. Care red. Box 6565.

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